THE VAIN RELIGION OF THE Formal Hypocrite,

And the mischief of an unbridled Tongue (as against Religion, Rulers, or Dissenters) described, in several Sermons, Preached at the Abby in *Westminster*, before many Members of the Honourable House of Commons. 1660.

AND

The Fools Prosperity,

The occasion of his destruction: A Sermon Preached at *Coven-Garden*.

Both published to heal the effects of some Hearers misunderstandings and misreports.

By *Richard Baxter*.

London, Printed by *R. W.* for *F. Tyton*, at the three daggers in *Fleet-street*, and *Nevel Simmons* Bookseller at *Kederminster*. 1660. At 1s. bound

Lagi Oct. 1717.

100. W. 30

TO THE READER.

THough God be not the Author of ſin, he knows why he permitteth it in the world. He will be no loſer and Satan ſhall be no gainer by it in the end. The malice of the Devil & wicked men, is ordinarily the deſtruction of the cauſe which they moſt deſire to promote; and an advantage by accident to the cauſe and perſons which they would root out from the earth. Were

there no more to prove this, than the Inſtances of *Joſephs* brethren, of *Pharaoh*, and the murderers of our Lord, it were enough. We uſually loſe more by the flatteries of Satan and the world, than by their violence. If theſe haſty, courſe, unpoliſhed Sermons, ſhall prove beneficial to the ſouls of any, this alſo may come in among the lower rank of Inſtances. If the Devil had let me alone, they might have been caſt aſide, and no further moleſted him or his Kingdom, for ought I know, than they did upon the Preaching of them. But ſeeing he will needs, by malicious miſreports, and ſlanders, kindle ſuſpicion, and raiſe offence, againſt

againſt them and the Author, let him take what he gets by it. He hath never yet got much from me, by violence, or by his foulmouthed ſlanderous inſtruments: No not when the impudence or multitude of their ſlanders, have forced me to be ſilent, leſt I trouble the Reader, or miſſpend my time.

The firſt of theſe Diſcourſes, being intended to undeceive the Formal Hypocrite, and to call men from a *Vain*, to a *Saving ſerious Religion*, and to acquaint them that cry out againſt *Hypocriſie*, where the Hypocrite is to be found, it ſeems, provoked the *Ignorant* or the *Guilty*; in ſo much that the cry went that I Preacht down all *Forms* of

Prayer, and all Government and Order in the Church: when there is not a Syllable that hath any ſuch ſenſe: But it ſeems what I ſpoke againſt the *Carkaſs*, was interpreted to be ſpoken againſt the *Body* of Religion.

The words of Mr. *Bolton* and other Divines, which I have cited againſt the Reproachers of ſerious piety, are added ſince the Preaching of the reſt, as being more fit to be preſented here to the eye, than in the Pulpit to the ear.

The petulancy of men on *both extreams*, conſtrained me to add, *The Bridle for their tongues.*

The ſecond Diſcourſe I underſtand offended ſome few of

of the Gallants, that thought they were too roughly handled; let them here peruſe it, and better concoct it, if they pleaſe.

I only add this Obſervation to the Heirs of Heaven, that are above this world, and live by Faith.

Few rich men are truly Religious: It is as hard for them to be ſaved, as for a Camel to go through a needles eye. Yet rich men will every where be the Rulers of the world, and ſo (as to outward protection or oppoſition) the Judges in matters of Religion. Judge therefore whether Dominion and earthly raign, be the portion of the Saints (as Jewiſhly ſome of late imagine): and

what uſage we muſt ordinarily expect on earth! and what condition the Church of Chriſt is like to be in to the end. As *his Kingdom*, ſo *ours*, is not of this world. A low, deſpiſed, ſuffering ſtate, is it that Believers muſt ordinarily expect, and prepare for, and ſtudy to be ſerviceable in. If better (may I call it better) come, take it as a Feaſt, and grudge not when the table is withdrawn; and look not it ſhould be our every dayes fare. But yet value the more highly thoſe few of the Rich, and Great, and Rulers, that are above this world, and devote their *power* and *riches* to the Lord, and are *Holy* and *Heavenly* in the midſt of ſo great temptations

temptations and impediments.

The Lord teach us to uſe this tranſitory world as not *overuſing* it, that we may never hear, *Remember that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things,*] Luke 16.25. How ſhortly will they find themſelves everlaſtingly undone, that made not ſure of a more enduring portion! Reader, that thou mayſt ſavingly remember theſe *common*, but *neceſſary*, though *much neglected* truths, is the end of theſe endeavours, and ſhall be the matter of my hearts deſire and prayers, while the Lord continneth me

His ſervant for the promoting the increaſe and edification of his Church,

Nov. 15. 1660. R. Baxter.

Postscript.

Readers, meeting [in his consideration of the Liturgy*] with these following words of Reverend D.* Gauden [I cannot but commend the Candor, Justice, and Integrity of M. *Baxter*, who lately professed to me, that he saw nothing in the Liturgy, which might not well bear a good construction, if men looked upon it as became Christians, with eyes of Charity,] *I was sensible of the great respects of this Learned and Reverend man; but left you misunderstand both him and me, I think it best to tell you more fully what*

what were my words. Speaking for reformation of the Common prayer Book, and an addition of other forms in Scripture phraſe, with liberty of choice, &c. *I ſaid,* That for the Doctrine of the Common prayer Book, though I had read exceptions againſt divers paſſages, I remembred not any thing that might not receive a good conſtruction, if it were read with the ſame candour and allowance, as we read the writings of other men.] *So that it was only the* Truth of the Doctrine *that I ſpoke of; againſt which I hate to be peeviſhly quarrelſome, — when God hath bleſt this Church ſo wonderfully, with a moderate and cautelous, yet effectual Reformation in matter of* Doctrine:

ctrine : *The more pity is it, that the very modes of Worship and Discipline should be the matter of such sharp and uncharitable discords, which must one day prove the grief of those that are found to have been the causes of it, and of the sufferings of the Church on that occasion.*

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THE VAIN RELIGION Of the Formal HYPOCRITE.

Jam. 1. 26.

If any man among you ſeem to be Religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans Religion is vain.

BEloved hearers, I may ſuppoſe that we are all come hither to day, for the great end of our lives; and to labour in that work

for which we are created, redeemed, preſerved, inſtructed, and furniſhed with the helps and means of Grace: even to prepare for death that is coming to arreſt us, and for the preſence of our Judge, who ſtands as at the door; and to make our Calling and Election ſure, that the glory of the Saints may be our lot, when the world of the ungodly are caſt into endleſs miſery and deſpair. And I hope I may ſuppoſe that in order to this end, you would gladly be acquainted with the *cauſes* of damnation, that you may avoid them; with your greateſt *dangers*, that you may eſcape them; and with the *hinderances* of your ſalvation, that you may overcome them. When we read in the Goſpel, that ſalvation is to be *offered unto all*, and no man is excepted or ſhut out, but ſuch as ſhut out and except themſelves; and yet read

that

that there are but *few* that find the *ſtrait gate*, and the *narrow way*, and that the *flock is little* that ſhall have the *Kingdom*, and that *many ſhall ſeek to enter that ſhall not be able*, (Matth. 7. 13, 14. Luk. 12. 32. and 13. 24.) we muſt needs conclude that ſome powerful enemy ſtandeth in the way, that can cauſe the ruine of ſo many millions of ſouls: But when we go further and find what rich *preparations* God hath made, and what *means* he hath uſed, and what abundant *helps* he offereth and affordeth to bring men to this bleſſed ſtate of life, it forceth us to admire that *any enemy* can be *ſo ſtrong*, as to fruſtrate ſo many, and ſuch excellent means. But when we yet go further, and find that ſalvation is *freely offered*, and that the purchaſe is made by a Saviour to our hands, and that *hearty conſent* is the *condition* of our *Title*, and nothing

but our *wilful refusal* can undo us; when we find that salvation is brought down to mens *wills*, and also what *motives* and *convincing helps*, and *earnest perswasions* are appointed and used to make men *willing*; we are then surprized with yet greater admiration, that *any deceiver* can be *so subtile*, or the *heart of man* can be *so foolish*, as to be drawn (in despight of all these means) to *cast away* the immortal crown, that else no enemy could have *taken from him*. And now we discern the quality of our *enemy*, of our *snares*, of our *danger*, and of our *duty*: It is not meer *Violence* but *Deceit* that can undo us: not *force* but *fraud* that we have to resist. And were not the mind of a carnal man exceeding brutish, (while he seemeth wise for carnal things) it were a thing incredible that so many men, could by all the subtilty of hell be drawn

in

in the day-light of the Gospel, deliberately and obstinately to refuse their happiness, and to choose the open way of their damnation, and leave their friends lamenting their calamity, that might have mercy, and cannot be perswaded to consent.

That *Satan* is the *great Deceiver*, and *layeth* the snare, and *manageth* the bait, we are all convinced: that the *world* and all our *fleshly accommodations* are the *instrumental Deceivers*; the snare, the bait, which Satan useth, is also a thing that we all confess. But that beside the *Devil* and the *World*, a *Reasonable Creature* should be his *own Deceiver*, and that in a business of unspeakable, everlasting consequence, and that *Religion* it self, (a *seeming Religiousness* that indeed is *Vain*,) should be made by himself the means of his *Deceit*, this is a mysterie, that is opened to

you in my Text, and requireth our moſt careful ſearch and conſideration.

When *Satan* and the *World* have wounded us by *their Deceits*, *Religion* is it that helpeth us to a *cure*. He that is *Deceived* by *pleaſures*, and *profits*, and the *vain-glory* of the world, muſt be *undeceived* and *recovered* by *Religion*, or he muſt periſh. But that *Religion it ſelf* ſhould become his *deceit*, and the *remedy* prove his *greateſt miſery*, is the moſt ſtupendious effect of Satans ſubrilty, and a ſinners fraudulency, and the ſaddeſt aggravation of his deplorable calamity. And yet, alas, this is ſo *common* a caſe, that where the Goſpel is Preached, it ſeems to be Satans principal game, and the high-way to hell. There is no other *Name* by which we can be ſaved, but by *Jeſus Chriſt*, the only Mediator, between ſinful man, and

and the offended Majeſty: and yet what is there in all the world, that is more abuſed to the deceiving of mens ſouls, then the *Name* & *Grace* of *Jeſus Chriſt?* Men that might be ſaved by an *effectual Faith*, are cheated and deſtroyed by *falſe Faith* and *preſumption*. The *merciful nature of God*, is the groundwork of all the *comforts* of the *godly*: and yet there is nothing that is more abuſed, to the deceiving of mens ſouls; that will profeſs that they *truſt* in the mercies of God, while they are labouring to be miſerable, by the refuſing and reſiſting the mercy that would ſave them. The *free promiſes of the Goſpel* do ſupport true believers; but are abuſed to the deceiving of the preſumptuous world. And ſo the Apoſtle telleth us that many do by their *Religion*: They will have a *Religion* to *deceive* themſelves; but not to *ſave* them.

It is the *Hypocrite* that is the *ſubject* in my text, who is deſcribed by this double property. 1. That he *ſeemeth to be Religious*. 2. That his *obedience* anſwereth not this *ſeeming* or profeſſion: the inſtance is given in the *bridling of his tongue*, becauſe that was the point that the Apoſtle had ſome ſpecial reaſon to inſiſt on, with thoſe to whom he immediately directed his Epiſtle. Though its plain in *ver.* 22, 23, *&c.* that it is the *whole work of obedience* that he implyeth, where he inſtanceth in this particular. The ſin of the tongue which he ſpecially intendeth to reprove, was the bitter reproaching of their brethren, upon the account of their differences in matters of Religion, and the vilifying of others, and uncharitable paſſionate contendings and cenſures, upon pretence of knowing more then others; as appeareth in the third Chapter throughout. The

The *Predicate* is double: one by way of *ſuppoſition*; viz. that this hypocrite doth but *deceive his own heart*: The other by way of *aſſertion*; viz. that *his Religion is vain.*

Whether θρῆσκος and θρησκεία be fetcht as far as from *Orpheus* the *Thracian*, as *Eraſmus* and many others imagine, is of no great moment to our underſtanding of the text, it being evident that it is the *worſhipping of God*, that is here meant by [*Religion*]; and it is men addicted to his worſhip, that are called *Religious.* The *ſeeming* here ſpoken of, refers both to *himſelf* and *others*: he that *ſeemeth* to *himſelf* to be Religious, or is judged ſo by *other* men. By *bridling the tongue*, is meant, reſtraining it from evil ſpeech. By *deceiving himſelf*, is meant, the miſtake of his judgement concerning the *ſincerity*, and *acceptableneſs*,

and *reward* of his Religion, and the fruſtrating of his own expectations hereupon. His Religion is ſaid to be [in Vain] in that it ſhall not attain the ends of an unfeigned true Religion, of which more anon. The ſence of the Text then, is contained in theſe two Propoſitions.

1. *There is a ſeeming Religiouſneſs, which is but ſelf-deceiving, and will prove in Vain.*

2. *Where ſincere obedience doth not accompany the profeſſion of Religion, and in particular, when ſuch men bridle not their tongues, their Religion is but Vain and ſelf-deceiving.*

Theſe two being contained in the text, the former comprized in the latter, I ſhall handle them together, and ſhew you, 1. *What this ſeeming Religion is*, and how it differeth from true Religion. 2. *Wherein* this *ſelf-deceiving* by a ſeeming Religion doth conſiſt. 3. *Whence it is* that men are ſo

prone

prone to this *ſelf-deceit.* 4. *In what reſpects* this *Religion is Vain*, and *why.* 5. And then we ſhall conſider how to *improve* theſe truths by a due *application.*

1. Concerning the firſt, I muſt ſhew you, 1. *What this ſeeming Religion is made up of.* 2. And *what it wants*, which maketh it deluſory and vain.

In general, This *Vain Religion*, is *made up* ſometimes, of all that, 1. A laudable nature or temperature of body, 2. And good education and excellent means, 3. Aſſiſted by the common workings of the Spirit, can produce.

More particularly, 1. *A Vain Religionſneſs*, may have a great deal of *ſuperficial opinionative knowledge*: and ſo may have the *trueſt Religion* for its *object*: the *true doctrines of Faith*, may be believed by a *Faith that is not true*: the hypocrite as to the *materials*

every part of his Creed may be Orthodox, when *ignorance* aboundeth he may be a *knowing man*, and pity the ignorance of others: when *errors* abound, he may be of the *right opinion* in Religion, and speak much against the errors of the times, as one that is wiser then the giddy heretical sort of people: He may [*Know the will of God, and approve the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law, and be confident that he himself is a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructer of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hath the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the Law,*] Rom. 2. 18, 19, 20. He may know *as much materially* as the upright may, and be able to convince gainsayers, and be a notable Champion for the defending of the truth, against the many adversaries that oppose it: and so may be eminently

nently uſefull in his generation.

2. He that is but *Religious in Vain*, may be frequent in the worſhipping of God; and may *ſeek him daily, and delight to know his wayes, and to approach him*, and *ask of him the Ordinances of juſtice*, as if he were one of the people that *did righteouſneſs*, and *forſook not the Ordinances of their God*, Iſa. 58. 1, 2. He may be oft in *faſting*, and punctual in keeping holy dayes and ceremonies, as verſe 3. *Iſa.* 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. *Luke* 18. 11, 12, 13. and exerciſe much ſeverity on himſelf, [*after the commandments and doctrines of men in things that have a ſhew of wiſdom, in Will-worſhip, and Humility, and neglecting of the body not in any honour to the ſatisfying of the fleſh,*] Col. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23. Though he be ſlow paced in the right way, he is ſwift in his miſtaken paths. Though he liketh not preciſeneſs, zeal,

zeal, and forwardneſs, in the *ſpiritual* works that *God* preſcribeth; yet when it comes to his *own*, or other mens *inventions*, he will be religious and *righteous overmuch*, Eccleſ. 7. 16. and forward to *offer the ſacrifice of a fool*, that conſidereth not that he is but *doing evil*, while he thinks to pleaſe God with the *ſacrifice* of his ſervices, though he *turn away his ear from* an obedient *hearing* the word that ſhould direct him, *Eccleſ.* 5. 1,2. *Prov.* 28. 9.

3. He that is but *Religious in Vain*, may *ſee the evil of diſcord and diviſions*, and *inveigh* much againſt *ſchiſmaticks*, and ſee the *excellency* of *unity* and *peace*; and therefore may joyn himſelf with the *viſible Catholick Church*, and with the *Chriſtians* and *Congregations* that are *moſt* for *unity*. There have alwayes been *Hypocrites* in the moſt orderly peaceable ſocie-

ties

ties of believers, and ſtill will be.

4. The ſelf-deceiving Hypocrite, is oft-times very *ſenſible of the evil of vertiginous mutability in Religion*; and therefore he may be much reſolved to continue what he is, and may caſt many a jeer at the weather-cocks of the times, and the unconſtancy and levity of ignorant, or temporizing men: and may ſtand to his party, and profeſſion, againſt much oppoſition, as glorying in his conſtancy, and being aſhamed to be thought a changling, or ſuch a turn-coat as others whom he merrily derideth.

5. An Hypocrite that hath no other *Religion* but deluſory and *vain*, may *obſerve* the *weakneſſes* of perſons that are of *lower education* and *parts*, and may *loath their indiſcretion* in conference and behaviour, and their *unhanſome expreſſions* in *prayer* and other duties,

ties, and ſhake the head at them, as ſilly, contemptible, ſelf-conceited fellows; and his heart may riſe againſt their diſorder, tautologies and affectations: And its like enough, that hereupon he will jeaſt at *conceived prayer*, or *extemporate* (as they call it;) and bleſs himſelf as ſafe in his Parrot-like devotions, becauſe the *ſame ſpirit* teacheth not *fine words*, and rhetorical language, to all that it teacheth to *pray with unutterable ſighs and groans*, Rom. 8. 26, 27. though the *ſearcher of hearts* (who is not delighted with complements and ſet ſpeeches) doth well underſtand the *meaning of the ſpirit*.

5. The ſelf-deceiving Hypocrite doth frequently pretend to be a *man of moderation in matters of Religion*, as diſtaſting the *hair-braind zealots*, as he counteth them, that cannot be content to have their *faith and Religion to themſelves* before

fore God, and to *live* and *talk as others do*, but must be *singular*, and make a *stir* with their Religion, and turn the world upside down. The *true zeal* of the *godly* is usually *distastefull* to him; and the *corrupt zeal* of *Schismatical* persons, doth cause him to bless himself in his lukewarmness, and to take his most odious indifferency, and want of fervent love to God and his holy ways to be his vertue.

6. This self-deceiving Hypocrite doth frequently pretend to an *exceeding great Reverence in the managing of the outward part of worship*; and to an extraordinary zeal about the Circumstantials of Religion. He accounts them all *schismatical and prophane*, that place not as much of their Religion as he doth, in gestures and forms, and other accidents of worship, acquainting us that the Pharisaical temper in religion is natural, and will

will ſtill continue in the world.

7. If the temptation of the *Hypocrite* lie on the *other ſide*, he can withdraw himſelf into ſome *ſmall* or *ſeparating ſociety*, and place his Religion in the ſingularity of his *opinions*, or in the ſtrictneſs of the *way* and *party* that he *owneth*; and in his *conceited ability* in his conceived or ready expreſſions in prayer; and can cry out as much upon the *Formaliſt*, as the *Formal Hypocrite* upon *him*: and glory in his *zeal*, as the other in his *moderation*. It is in the *Heart* that Hypocriſie hath its throne; from whence it can command the *outward* acts into *any* ſhapes that are agreeable to its ends: and can uſe materials of divers natures, as the fewell and nutriment of its malignity. And what ever party ſuch are joined to, and what ever way they have been trained up to, whether Formality, or ſchiſm, or more regular,

gular, ſober, equal wayes, in all of them their *Religion* is but *Vain*, and they do but *deceive themſelvs* by all.

8. The *Religion* that is but deluſory and *Vain*, may be *accompanied with much Alms*, and *works of ſeeming Juſtice, and Charity*, Mat. 6. 1, 2. Luke 18. 11, 12. He may have many vertues called moral; and be a man of much eſteem with others, even with the beſt and wiſeſt, for his ſeeming Wiſdom, and piety, and juſtice. He may be *no extortioner, unjuſt, adulterer*, but as to groſs ſins ſeem blameleſs, *Luke* 18. 11, 12. *Phil.* 3. 6. and be much in reproaching the ſcandalous lives of others, and thank God that he is none ſuch, *Luke* 18. 11.

9. He that hath but a *vain Religion*, may in his judgement approve of ſaving grace, and like the more zealous, upright, ſelf-denying, heavenly lives of others: and wiſh

wiſh that he might but die their death; and wiſh himſelf as happy as they, ſo it might be had on his own terms: And he may have ſome counterfeit of every grace; and think that it is true. *Numb.* 23.10. *Jam.* 2. 14, &c. 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3. *Mark* 6.20.

10. None will be more forward to call *another Hypocrite*, then the *Hypocrite:* nor to extoll ſincerity and uprightneſs of heart and life. And thus you ſee what this Vain Religion is made up with.

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2. IF you marvell what the *Hypocrite* yet *wants*, that makes his *Religion* deluſory and *Vain*, I ſhall now tell you I hope to your conviction and ſatisfaction.

1. For all his forementioned Religion, he wants the *Spirit of Chriſt*, to dwell as his *ſanctifier* within him; And [*if any man have not the*

the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his] Rom. 8. 9. But because this is known by the effects, I add,

2. He wants that *spiritual new birth*, by which he should be made *spiritual*, as his *first birth* made him carnal, *John* 3. 5, 6. *Rom.* 8. 6, 7, 8. He is *born of the will of the flesh*, and *of man*, but not *of God*, *John* 1. 13. From the *first man Adam* he is *become a living soul*; but by the *second man*, Christ, *the Lord from heaven*, he is not yet *quickned* in the *Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45, 46. He is not *born again of the incorruptible seed, the word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever*, 1 Pet. 1. 23. He is not yet *saved by the washing of Regeneration* (save only as to the outward baptism) and by *renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is shed by Christ* on all his members, that *being justified by his grace, they should be made*

made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, Tit. 3. 5, 6. They are not *new creatures*, *old things* being not *past away*, and *all things* with them *become new*: and therefore it is certain that they are not in *Christ*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. They have not *put off the old man with his deceitfull lusts*, and deeds, nor have *put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, Eph. 3. 22, 23, 24. Col. 3. 9, 10. They have but patcht up the old unsanctified hearts, and smooth'd over their carnal conversations, with civility and plausible deportment, and so much Religion as may cheat themselves as well as blind the eyes of others. But they are *strangers to the life of God*, Ephes. 4. 18. and never were made *partakers of the Divine nature* which all the children of God partake of, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. nor of that *Holiness, without which none shall*

see

see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14.

3. Though he make a slight and customary confession of his sins, unworthiness and misery, yet *is he not kindly humbled at the heart*, nor made truly *vile in his own eyes*, nor *contrite* and *broken-hearted*; nor *emptyed of himself*, as seeing himself undone by his own iniquities; crying out *Unclean*, and *loathing himself for all his abominations*; *weary* of his sin, and *heavy-laden*, as all must be that are fit for Christ. Read *Isa.* 57. 15. & 66. 2. *Psal.* 51. 17. & 34. 18. *Lev.* 13. 44, 45. *Ezek.* 36. 31. & 20. 43. & 6. 9. *Matth.* 11. 28. *Rom.* 7. 24.

4. This mans Religion must needs be *Vain*; for he wanteth the *life of faith it self*, and *heartily believeth not in Christ*. He hath but an *opinion* of the truth of Christianity, through the advantage of his education and company; and thereupon doth *call him-*

self

ſelf a *Chriſtian*, and *heartleſly talk* of the myſterie of Redemption as a *common thing*. But he doth not with an humbled broken heart, betake himſelf to Chriſt as his only refuge from the wrath of God and everlaſting miſery, as he would lay hold on the hand of his friend, if he were drowning: The ſenſe of the odiouſneſs of ſin, and of the damnation threatned by the righteous God, hath not yet taught him to value Chriſt, as he muſt be valued by ſuch as will be ſaved by him. Theſe hypocrites do but *talk* of Chriſt, and turn *his name*, as they do *their prayers*, into the matter of a *dry and cuſtomary form*. They flie not to him as the only Phyſician of their ſouls, in the feeling of their feſtring wounds: they cry not to him as the Diſciples in the tempeſt, *Save Maſter, we periſh*. They value him not practically (though notionally they

they do) as the *pearl* for which they must *sell all*, Matth. 13. 44, 45, 46. Christ doth not *dwell in his heart by faith*: nor doth he long *with all the Saints to comprehend, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*, Eph. 3. 17, 18, 19. He counteth not *all things loss for Christ, and the excellency of his knowledge*, nor doth he *count them as dung*, that he may *win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ*, Phil. 3. 8, 9, 10. nor can he truly say, that he *desireth to know nothing but a crucified Christ*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. and that *the life that he now liveth in the flesh, he liveth by the faith of the Son of God that loved him, and gave himself for him*,] Gal. 2. 20. He is not taken up with that admiration of the love of God in

Chriſt, as beſeems a ſoul that is ſaved by him from the flames of hell, and that is reconciled to God, and made an heir of life everlaſting. He hath not underſtandingly, deliberately, ſeriouſly, and unreſervedly given up himſelf and all that he hath to Chriſt: and thankfully accepted Chriſt and life, as given on the Goſpel terms to him. This *living effectual faith* is wanting to the Hypocrite, whoſe *Religion* is *Vain.*

5. This *Vain Religion* doth *never practically ſhew the ſoul the amiableneſs and attractive goodneſs of God, ſo far as to win the heart to a practical eſtimation of him, and adhering to him above all*; nor ſo far as to advance him *above all the creatures* in the *practical judgement, will and converſation*: nor doth it cauſe the ſoul to take him for its portion, and prefer his favour before all the world, and de-

vote

vote it ſelf and all unto his intereſt and will, and give him the ſuperlative and ſoveraign honour, both in heart and life: *Pſal* 63.3. and 30.5. and 4.6,7. and 16.5. and 17.14. *Mat.* 10.37.

6. This *Vain Religion* is alwayes without that *ſerious belief of the life to come*, which cauſeth the ſoul to take it for its *happineſs and treaſure*, and there to ſet its *deſires* and its *hopes*, and to make it his *principal care and buſineſs to attain it*; and to make all the pleaſures, and profits, and honours of the world to ſtoop to it, as preferring it before them all, *Matth.* 6.20,21. and *ver.* 33. *Luk.* 18.22,23. and 14.33. *Col.* 3.1,2,3,4,5. *Phil.* 3.18,19,20. The Hypocrite taketh *heaven* but for a *reſerve*, and as a *leſſer evil then hell*, and ſeeks it but in the *ſecond place*, while his fleſhly pleaſures and intereſt have the preheminence, and God hath

no more but the *leavings of the world*; and he ſerveth him but with ſo much as his *fleſh can ſpare*.

7. This *Vain Religion* conſiſteth principally in *external obſervances*: If he be a *Formaliſt* that hath it, his Religion lyeth in his beads and prayer books; in going ſo oft to Church, and keeping holy dayes and faſting dayes, and ſaying over ſuch and ſuch words, and uſing ſuch and ſuch geſtures and ceremonies, and ſubmitting to Church orders, and crying down *Sectaries* and preciſeneſs, and jearing at the ſimplicity of plain hearted Chriſtians, that never learnt the art of diſſimulation. Their Religion is but a pack of Complements, a flattering of God, as if they would mock him with cap and knee, (who will not be mocked,) *Gal.* 6. 7. while they *draw near him with their lips, their hearts are far from him*,

him, Mat. 15. 7, 8, 9. They *wash the outside*, and pay *tithe of all*; and give some *almes*, and forbear disgraceful sins, which would make them be esteemed ungodly among men, *Mat.* 15. 2, 3. *Mar.* 7. 4, 8. *Matth.* 23. 25, 26, &c. *Mat.* 6. 1, 4, 6. &c. *Isa.* 1. 11, 12, 13, 14. *Isa.* 58. 1, 2. But these self-deceivers are strangers to the *inward* spiritual work of holiness: Their *hearts* are not busie in the worship of God, by fervent *desire*, and exercise of other graces, while their *tongues* are put into an artificial pace, and they are acting the part of men that *seem* to be *Religious*.

If they be cast into the *Sectarian* mold, they place their Religion in the strictness of their *Principles* and *Parties*, and in *contending* for *them*, and in their *affected fervour*, and ability to *speak* and pray *ex tempore*. But the *humble*, *holy*, *in-*

ward workings of the ſoul toward God, and its *breathings after him*, and the watch that it ſets over the heart, this hypocrite is much a ſtranger to.

If he be brought up among the *Orthodox* in well ordered Churches, he placeth his Religion in the *holding of the truth*, and taking the *right ſide*, and ſubmitting to *right order*, and uſing Gods ordinances: but the moſt of an *upright* mans employment is at *home*, *within him*; to order his *ſoul*, and exerciſe *grace*, and keep down ſin, and keep out the world, and keep under the fleſh, and carnal ſelf, and do the *inward* part of duty: And he is as truly ſolicitous about *this*, as about the *outward* works: and contenteth not himſelf to have *ſaid* his prayers, unleſs indeed his *heart* have prayed; nor to have *heard*, unleſs he have *profited*, or heard with obediential attention:

And

And he makes conſcience of *ſecret* duties, as well as of thoſe that are done in the ſight of men: But this the hypocrite comes not up to, to *trade* in the *internal ſpiritual* part.

8. The *Religion* that is *Vain*, is *without an univerſal hatred of known ſin*, and an actual conquering of it, ſo far as to live out of *groſs* ſin, (which ſome call mortal) and to be weary of infirmities, and to be truly deſirous to be rid of all; and to be willing to uſe Gods means againſt it. Thus it is with the *ſincerely* Religious; but not with theſe hypocrites that *deceive themſelves*, Joh. 3. 19, 20. Rom. 7. 24. Luk. 13. 3, 5. Rom. 8. 1. to the 14. *Gal.* 6. 7, 8. The hypocrite hath not only ſome *particular* ſin, which all his Religion makes him not willing to ſee to be a ſin, or to forſake; but his very *ſtate* is ſinful in the *main*, by the predominacy

dominancy of a ſelfiſh carnal intereſt and principle: And he is not willing of cloſe plain dealing, much leſs of the diligent uſe of means himſelf to overcome that ſin: becauſe he loveth it.

9. This *Vain Religion* is not accompanied with *an unfeigned Love to a life of holineſs*, which every true believer hath, delighting to meditate in the Law of God, with a *practical* intention to obey it; and delighting in the *inward* exerciſe of grace, and outward ordinances as advantages *hereunto*; deſiring ſtill more of the grace which he hath taſted, and grieving that he knoweth, and truſteth, and loveth, and feareth, and obeyeth God ſo little, and longing to reach higher, to know, and love, and fear him more, *Pſal.* 1. 2. and 119. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, &c. *Heb.* 12. 14. 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. *Matth.* 7. 13, 14. But the *ſelf-deceiver* either hath

hath a *ſecret diſlike* of this *ſerious diligence* for ſalvation, and loving God with all the ſoul, and might, (becauſe he is conſcious that he reacheth it not himſelf,) or at leaſt he will not be brought to entertain any more then will ſtand with his carnal ends.

10. A *Vain Religion* doth not ſo far reveal the excellency of *Chriſts image in his ſervants*, as to cauſe *an entire Love to them as ſuch*; and to *delight* in them above the moſt ſplendid and accompliſht perſons that are ſtrangers to the life of grace; and ſo far to love them, as when Chriſt requireth it, to part with our ſubſtance, and hazard our ſelves for their relief. Thus do the truly Religious, *Pſal.* 16. 2. and 15. 4. 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *Matth.* 10. 40. 11. 42. and 25. 34, 35, 40, 42, 45, 46. But the hypocrite either *ſecretly hateth* a heavenly holy life, and conſequent-

ly the people that are ſuch, (becauſe they ſeem to condemn him by overgoing him, and differing from him) or at leaſt he only *ſuperficially approveth* of them; but will forſake both Chriſt and them in tryal, rather then forſake his earthen God. I have now ſhewed you what the ſelf-deceiver wants, in which you may ſee ſufficient reaſon why his Religion is but Vain.

II. WE are next to ſhew you, *How theſe Hypocrites do deceive themſelves*, and wherein their ſelf-deceit conſiſteth. It may ſeem ſtrange that a man of reaſon ſhould do ſuch a thing as this, when we conſider that truth is naturally the object of the underſtanding, and that all men *neceſſarily* love themſelves, and therefore love what they know to be ſimply good

good for them: How then can any man, that hath the use of reason, be *willing* to be *deceived*, yea and be his *own deceiver*, and that in matters of unspeakable consequence! But it is not *as falshood*, nor *as deceit* that they desire it: but as it appeareth necessary to the carnal ease and pleasure which they desire.

The way by which they deceive their own hearts, consisteth in these following degrees.

1. The hypocrite *resisteth the Spirit of grace*, and rejecteth the mercies offered in the Gospel, and so by his refusal, is deprived of a part in Christ, and of the life of grace, and the hopes of glory, which were tendered to him.

2. But withal, he is *willing of so much* of this mercy as *consisteth with his sinful disposition, and carnal interest*: He is willing enough to be *happy in general*, and to be

saved

ſaved from hell fire, and to be *pardoned*, and to have *ſuch a heaven* as he hath framed a pleaſing imagination of.

3. And therefore he maketh him up a *Religion of ſo much of Chriſtianity as will ſtand with his pleaſures, profits and reputation* in the world, that ſo he may not be *left in deſpair* of being ſaved, when he muſt leave the world that he *muſt* loved. The *cheap* and the *eaſie* parts of Chriſtianity, and thoſe that are *moſt in credit* in the world, and that *fleſh and blood have leaſt againſt*, theſe he will cull out from among the reſt, and make him a Religion of, paſſing by the dearer, and more difficult, and ſpiritual parts.

4. Having gone thus far, he perſwadeth his own heart, that *this kind of Religion* which he hath patcht up and fram'd to him ſelf, is the *true Religion*, the Faith, the Hope,

Hope, the Charity, the Repentance, the Obedience, to which Salvation is promiſed. And that he is a *true Chriſtian*, notwithſtanding his defects; and that his ſpots are but ſuch as are conſiſtent with grace, and that his ſins are but *pardoned infirmities*: and that he hath part in Chriſt, and the promiſes of life, and ſhall be ſaved, though he be not of the preciſer ſtrain. When he committeth any ſin, he confidently imagineth, that his *confeſſion* and his *wiſhing it were undone again* (when he hath had all the pleaſure that ſin can give him) *is true repentance*: and that *as a penitent* he ſhall be forgiven. And thus while he thinketh himſelf *ſomething*, when he is *nothing*, he *deceiveth himſelf*, Gal. 6. 3. He hath a *counterfeit* of every grace of God. A counterfeit Faith, and Hope, and Love, and Repentance, and Zeal, and Humility, and Patience,

tience, and Perſeverance: and theſe he will needs take to be the very life and image of Chriſt, and the graces themſelves that accompany ſalvation.

5. Having got this *Carkaſs of Religion* without the *ſoul*, he makes uſe of all thoſe things to *confirm him* in his deceit, which are appointed to *confirm true Chriſtians* in their Faith and Hope. When he reads or thinks of the *infinite Goodneſs, Love and Mercy of God*, he thinks God could not be *ſo good* and *merciful*, if he ſhould refuſe to ſave all ſuch as he. When he readeth of the *undertaking* and *ſacrifice of Chriſt*, and how he is a *propitiation for the ſins of the whole world*, he confidently hence concludeth, that a Saviour ſo gracious, that hath done and ſuffered ſo much for ſinners, cannot condemn *all ſuch as he*. When he readeth of the *extent and freeneſs of Grace*,

in

in the *promiſes* of the Goſpel, he concludeth that *theſe promiſes* belong to *him*, and that *Grace* could not be ſo *free* and ſo extenſive, if it did ſhut out all ſuch as he. When he obſerveth the *Mercies of God upon his body*, in his friends, and health, and credit, and proſperity, he concludeth, that ſurely God *loveth him as a child*, in that he dealeth ſo *Fatherly* with him. If he *ſuffer adverſity*, he thinks that it is the *Fatherly chaſtiſement* of God, and therefore proveth him to be *his ſon*, and that he ſhall have his *good things* in the world to come, becauſe he had his *evils here*. If he ſuffer any thing for a good cauſe, (or a cauſe that he taketh to be good) he taketh himſelf to be a *Confeſſor*, and marked out for life eternal. If he give any conſiderable *alms*, he applyeth all the promiſes to himſelf that are made to thoſe that are *truly charitable*,

ritable, though he giveth but the *leavings of the flesh*, and giveth but *on common compassions*, or *for applause*, or for some *common end*, and not *as to Christ* whom he honoureth in his members, as one that hath resigned all unto him. If he *pray*, from the lips only, or only for pardon and such other mercies as flesh it self would be glad to have, without the unexpressable groans of the spirit, for spiritual mercies (*Rom.* 8. 26) he presently applyeth all the promises to himself that are made to the *upright that call upon God*. And thus *Love*, *Mercy*, and *Christ himself* are abused by him to this damning work of *self-deceit*.

6. Moreover, he makes use of *all the ordinances of God*, to the *deceiving* of *his own heart*. The *outward* part of *Baptism*, perswades him that he is *inwardly regenerate*. He receiveth the *Lords supper*, that he

he may confirm his *preſumption*, and increaſe his *ſelf-deceit*, as the godly receive it to confirm and increaſe their *ſaving faith*. He joyneth with the *Church* in thoſe *prayers and praiſes* that are *fitted to the true believers ſtate*, that he may thence more confidently *deceive his own heart*, with the conceit that *he* is *a true believer*. And thus he turneth the bread of life, and all the helps and means of grace, to the ſtrengthening of his ſin, and the furthering of his perdition.

7. Moreover, this miſerable *ſelf-deceiver*, doth uſually get into ſuch *company* as may further his *ſelf-deceit*, and maketh uſe of them to that end. If he get into any *holy well-ordered Church* of Chriſtians, it is that by his *outward communion* with the Saints, he may ſeem to himſelf to have *inward communion* with them. If he get among *able godly* Miniſters and other

other judicious Christians, and finds that he is *well esteemed* of by them, he is confirmed hereby in his *presumption and self-deceit*: when alas, we must in *charity* judge of men as they *profess and seem*, and leave the *infallible judgement* of the *heart* to God. *Usually* this self-deceiving hypocrite doth associate with some *carnal* or *factious* men, with whom he makes himself a *party*: and such will smooth him up, and make a Saint of him, either because *they* are *as bad* themselves, and dare not condemn him, lest they condemn themselves; or because they *are flatterers* and *dawbers*, or men that were never themselves acquainted with those saving operations of the Spirit which he wants, or because they are *partial* to one of their *own faction*. And thus a *formal hypocrite* may be stroaked by *Formalists*, and a *Schismatical Hypocrite*

crite may be ſoothed up by thoſe of his own *Sect* (as lamentable experience telleth us that ſuch do) to the increaſe of their pernicious ſelf-deceit.

Yea more then ſo; if theſe hypocrites fall in company with the *notoriouſly prophane*, from them they will fetch ſome confirmation of their *ſelf-deceit*: when they hear them ſwear, and curſe, and rant, and ſee them drunk, they ſecretly with the Phariſee rejoyce, and ſay, *I thank thee Lord that I am not as this Publican.* And this is one reaſon why *ſuch hypocrites* are well content to have *ſome ſervants* in their *families*, or ſome *neighbours* or *company* about them that are *notoriouſly prophane*, that their deluded conſciences, conſidering that they are *more civil and religious* themſelves, may hence gather comfort, that they are the ſervants of God, and in a ſtate of grace. Hence

Hence alſo it is, that thoſe of them that go on the *Schiſmatical ſide*, do purpoſely go into *ſeparated ſocieties*, that by withdrawing from ſo many, and (as they ſpeak) *coming out from among them*, they may ſeem to themſelves to be *fellow-Citizens with the Saints*, and to be of the *little flock* that ſhall have the *Kingdom*. This is the uſe that ſelf-deceivers make of their *companions*.

8. Moreover, the Hypocrite confirmeth his ſelf-deceit, by obſerving the *great numbers* of *ungodly perſons worſe then he*, that are in the world: This makes him think that God ſhould be *unmerciful*, and heaven be empty, if all ſuch as he ſhould be ſhut out: *the damnation of ſo many* ſeemeth ſo *incredible* to him, that it much increaſeth his confidence and ſelf-deceit.

9. And he deceiveth himſelf alſo

ſo by a *miſobſerving and miſapplying the falls and infirmities of the ſervants of the Lord*, and the *ſcandalous lives* of *many Hypocrites* like himſelf. When he readeth of *Noahs* drunkenneſs, and *Lots* drunkenneſs and inceſt, and *Davids* adultery and murder, and *Peters* denyal of his Maſter with curſing and ſwearing, he conſidereth not how much theſe *ſingular actions* were *contrary* to the *ſcope* of *their lives*, nor by what *ſerious repentance* they did *riſe*, and do ſo no more; but he hence concludeth that ſure he is in a ſtate of grace, that hath *no ſuch* heinous ſins as theſe: though indeed he hath *more heinous* continually within him, (even a love of the world and pleaſure above God, a ſecret root of unbelief, a ſervitude to the fleſh, *&c.*) when he ſeeth any about him that profeſs the fear of God, prove Hypocrites or Apoſtates, or fall into

into any ſcandalous ſin, he ſtrengtheneth his preſumption by it, and concludeth that this profeſſion of *greater holineſs* then he himſelf hath, is but *Hypocriſie*; and that he is as good as thoſe that ſeem more *devout*, though he make not ſo much ado with his religion: or at leaſt that ſuch as *he* ſhall be ſaved, when thoſe are ſo bad that are accounted better: If there be but a *Cham* in the Ark and Family of *Noah*, an *Iſhmael* in *Abrahams* houſe, an *Eſau* in *Jacobs*, an *Abſalom* in *Davids*, a *Judas* among the Diſciples of Chriſt, theſe ſelf-deceivers will thence fetch matter for their own deluſion and perdition, as if the reſt were all as bad, or ſanctification were not neceſſary to ſalvation.

10. The ſelf-deceiver alſo is confirmed in his preſumption, *by taking to himſelf the comforts that Miniſters hold forth, for truly humbled*

humbled upright ſouls, that are apt to be too much diſquieted and caſt down. Our Congregations are mixt of *godly* and *ungodly*, and *broken-hearted* and *hard-hearted*, *dejected* and *ſelf-confident* ſinners (beſides all thoſe that are well ſetled in their ſpiritual peace.) And as we cannot tell how to tell the wicked of their miſery, nor open the Hypocrites ſelf-deceit, but the ſelf-ſuſpecting humbled ſouls will miſapply it to themſelves, and be more dejected by it, and ſay, *It is thus with me*; ſo we cannot tell how to *comfort* the *diſtreſſed*, and clear up the evidences of a drooping ſoul, but the *preſumptuous Hypocrite* will lay hold upon it, and think that it belongs to *him*. Every comfortable Book or Scripture that he readeth, and every comfortable Sermon or diſcourſe which he heareth, is abuſed to increaſe his ſelf-deceit.

11. It

11. It increaſeth the Hypocrites ſelf-deceit, *when he findeth ſome partial reformation in himſelf*, and that he hath mended many things that were amiſs: This he takes for a *true converſion*, and thinks that the civilizing and ſmoothing of his life, the change of his opinion, and the taking up a form of godlineſs, are *true Sanctification*; and that he is not the man that once he was; and therefore is in a ſafe condition: Though alas he hath never yet known by experience, the new *heart*, the new *ends*, the new *reſolutions*, *affections*, and *converſation* of a Saint.

12. Laſtly, he deceiveth himſelf by *miſunderſtanding the nature of hypocriſie*. Becauſe he perceiveth not that he is a *groſs diſſembler*, but meaneth as he ſpeaks, ſo far as he goes, therefore he thinks he is no Hypocrite: Whereas beſides the *groſs* Hypocrite that knoweth he doth

doth *dissemble*, and only deceiveth others, there are also *close* Hypocrites, that know not they are Hypocrites, but deceive themselves. And these are they that my Text here speaks of, when it saith [*He deceiveth his own heart.*] It is Hypocrisie [*to seem better then one is, and to profess to be a sincere Christian when he is none,*] though he confidently think that he is what he professeth himself to be.

III. BUt what is it that can *move* a Reasonable creature to be willfully guilty of such *self-deceit* in the day-light of the Gospel, when he hath so much help to see his way?

Answ. 1. They are first *deceived* by the *vanities* of the world, and the pleasures of sin, before they *deceive* themselves by their *Religion*. Their *Religious self-deceiving* is but subservient to their *fleshly servitude*, and the *worlds de-*

ceit. They are *carnal* from the birth: (for that which is born of the flesh only, is but flesh, *Joh.* 3. 6.) and custom in sinning fixeth and increaseth their sinful dispo-sition. Their hearts are engaged to their worldly accommodations, and to their vain-glory, and the things that please the flesh: They are willing slaves to their concu-piscence. And therefore they cannot admit of that Religion which would deprive them of that which they most dearly love. Christ speaks too late to them. They tell him they are promised already. Their affections are pre-engaged: sin hath taken up the chiefest rooms: And the heart that loveth sensuality and prosperity best, cannot love God best too: for it can have but *one best.* The nature of true Sanctification is to take down the darling of a carnal heart, and to cross it in its dearest loves,

loves, and to lay that at our feet that before was as our treasure, and to tame that body, and bring it into subjection, which before was in the throne. The *motions* of such a change will not be acceptable, till they are made so effectual as to *cause* that change: The command will be unpleasant, till the *heart* be suited to the *nature* of the command. He that seeth what care and labour there is to gather a worldly treasure, and what a stir is made in the world about it, can never expect that all this should be vilified and despised at a word, and that any doctrine (how true and heavenly soever,) can be welcome to these worldly men, that would debase their glory, and embitter their delights, and make their Idol seem but dung. The doctrine of Christ would take the *old heart* out of their bodies: and they will not easily leave their

hearts. It doth not only command the drunkard to live ſoberly, and the glutton temperately, and the laſcivious filthy ſinner chaſtly, and the proud perſon humbly, and the covetous to live contentedly and liberally; but it commandeth the *hearty forſaking of all, for the ſake of Chriſt*, *Luke* 14. 33. and the *accounting them but as loſs and dung that we may win him*, Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. and *mortifying of that fleſh* which before we daily ſtudyed to pleaſe, *Col.* 3. 4, 5. and the *crucifying of its affections and luſts*, Gal. 5 24. and the *denyal* even of *our ſelves*, Luk. 9. 23, 24. And for a *carnal mind* to love and yield to *ſuch* commands, were no other then to *ceaſe to be a carnal mind*. All this is largely expreſſed by the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 1, &c. *They that are in Chriſt Jeſus, walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* —— *For they that are after the fleſh,*

flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit: For to be carnally-minded is death, but to be Spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh, cannot please God. — *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if through the Spirit ye mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*]

You see here why it is that the self-deceiver will not entertain the power of godliness, nor be *Religious seriously* according to the true intent of the Gospel, and the nature of Christianity, even because he is *engaged* to a *contrary object*, and hath another game in chase, which he will not leave, and which true Religion requireth him to leave, and will not give him leave to follow. And therefore he part-

eth with the Religion which would have parted him from that which he will not part with.

2. But withall, he is all this while under the threatenings of the Law of God, and conſcience is ready to bear witneſs againſt him; and betwixt *Law* and *Conſcience*, the poor wretch is as the corn between two Milſtones; he would be ground to powder, and tortured with terrors before his time, if he had not ſome opiate or intoxicating medicine, to *eaſe* him by *deceiving* him, and to abate his fears, and quiet his conſcience as long as a palliate cure will ſerve turn. So that here are two things for which the *ſelf-deceiving Hypocrite* is fain to fall into his *Vain Religion*: The one is, that it may be a *cloak* to the *ſin* which he will *needs keep*: The other is, that it may ſave him from the *terrors* and *diſquietments*, that *for this ſin* his conſcience would elſe

elſe afflict him with. A belief that *he may be ſaved, for all his ſin*, is the relief that he hath againſt the terrors of the Law of God. He therefore chooſeth out ſuch parcels of Religion as may ſerve him for *this uſe*, and yet will not ſeparate him from the ſin that he delighteth in. The power of godlineſs will not conſiſt with his coverous, proud or fleſhly life: but the form and outſide will. And therefore this regeneration, and mortification, and ſelf-denyal, and ſubjection to the whole will of God, and this heavenly mindedneſs, and watching the heart, and walking with God, and living above the trifles of this world, and making it the chief buſineſs to prepare for another; *this* kind of *Religion*, which is *Religion indeed*, he *cannot* (becauſe he *will not*) entertain. *This* is the *ſtrait gate*, and *narrow way*, that *few men find*.

Here he must be *excused.* God is no *God for him*, upon these terms, (And he cannot and will not be his God on any other terms.) Christ is no Christ for him, unless he will excuse him from this trouble, and bear with him in his carnal course; that is, unless he will be indeed no Christ to him. Heaven is no heaven for him, unless he may pass to it through prosperity, and sin; and unless he may have it without the trouble of a holy life; that is, unless God will be unjust or false, and heaven cease to be heaven, and God cease to be God.

But yet these men are convinced that God is their rightful Governour, and that indeed they should love him and serve him with all their heart and might, and that without true Religion and godliness there is no salvation. To be *irreligious* and *prophane* they know is a state that can *afford no comfort*, or

or ſhelter from the wrath of God; and therefore *ſome Religion* they muſt have: They are not able to endure the thoughts of lying under the curſe of God. To conclude themſelves to be utterly graceleſs, and the children of the Devil, and in a ſtate of condemnation, is ſo terrible, that they are not able to endure it: Then every Sermon they hear would torment them, and every Chapter they read would torment them; and their pleaſures would all be imbittered to them, and nothing that they enjoy in all the world, would quiet and content them. (No, nor ſhall do long) And therefore they muſt needs take up ſome Religion, to quiet them for a little while, and to make them hope, that for all their ſins, they are not ſo bad, nor in ſo dangerous a caſe as Preachers tell them; *ſome Religion* they muſt *needs* have for

fear of being *damned*: *A ſound and ſerious* Religion they *will not* have, becauſe they *love the world and ſin*, which it would deprive them of: And therefore they patch up a *Vain Religion*, compoſed of ſo much *truth* and *duty* as will ſtand with their proſperity and beloved pleaſures: which will not ſave them, but ſufficeth to deceive them.

Two parts make up this ſelf-deceiving frame, as conſiſtent with their ſins: The one is the *formal, outward, eaſie, cheap* part of duty to God and man, in their *practiſe*; leaving out the ſpiritual, inward, difficult, dear, ſelf-denying part. The other is, the *ſtricteſt* parts of Religion in *bare opinion* and *notion*; while they ſhut it out of their *hearts* and *lives*. For both theſe may ſtand with a ſenſual, worldly, ſelfiſh life. He may read or ſay his prayers, and be a worldling ſtill: He

He may come to Church, and with the greateſt ceremony and ſeeming reverence receive the Sacrament, and bow before the Lord his Maker, and yet be *ſenſual* or a *worldling* ſtill. And he may be of the *ſtricteſt party or opinion*, and *notionally* condemn all ſin, and juſtifie the moſt holy life, and yet be ſenſual and worldly ſtill. And therefore this much he may be perſwaded to take up, to ſave himſelf from the laſhes of his conſcience. And ſo the uſe of the Hypocrites Religion is to be a *skreen* betwixt him and the flames of wrath, that would ſcorch him too ſoon, if he were of *no Religion*: and to be to him as a *tent* or *pentiſe*, to keep off the ſtorms that would fall upon him, while he is trading for the world, and working for the fleſh. His Religion is but the *ſheath* of his guilty conſcience, to keep it from wounding him, and cutting

cutting his fingers, while they are buſie in the brutiſh ſervice of his luſts. It is but as a *glove*, to ſave his skin, when he hath to do with the nettles and thorns of the threatenings of God, and the thoughts of vengeance, that elſe would rack his guilty ſoul. It is but as his *upper garment*, to ſave him from a *ſtorm*, and then to be laid by as an unneceſſary burden, when he is at home. The Hypocrites Religion is but as his *ſhooe*: he can tread it in the dirt, ſo it will but ſave his foot from galling. As a man that hath an *unquiet ſcolding wife*, is fain to ſpeak her fair by flatteries, leſt he ſhould have no reſt at home; or as a *thief* is fain to caſt a cruſt to the *dog* that barketh at him, to ſtop his mouth; ſo is an ungodly ſenſual perſon, fain to *flatter* his conſcience with *ſome kind* of *Religiouſneſs*, and to ſtop its mouth with ſome kind of devotion

devotion and ſeeming righteouſneſs, that may deceive him into a belief that he is the child of God. Religion is the *Soveraign* in a *gracious* ſoul, and the *Maſter* in an *upright* conſcience, and ruleth above all worldly intereſts. But with the unregenerate, it is but an *underling* and *ſervant*, that muſt do no more then the fleſh and the world will give conſent to; and is regarded no further then for *meer neceſſity*; and when it hath done the work which the Hypocrite appointed it, it is diſmiſſed and turned out of doors. God is acknowledged and loved by the Hypocrite; but not *as God*. Chriſt is believed in and accepted; but not *as Chriſt*; but as an underling to the world; and a journy-man to do ſome job of work for a diſtreſſed wrangling conſcience; or as an unwelcome Phyſician to give them a Vomit when they have taken

taken ſome extraordinary ſurfeit of ſenſual delights. When they have faln into great affliction, or into any foul diſgraceful ſin, then perhaps they take up their prayer books, or call upon Chriſt, and ſeem devout and very penitent. But their piety is blown over with the ſtorm. The effect ceaſeth with the cauſe. It was not the *Love of God*, or of his *holy wayes* and *ſervice*, that ſet them upon their devotions, but ſome tempeſt of adverſity, or ſhipwrack of their eſtates, or friends, or conſciences: and when the winds are laid and the waves are ſtill, their devotion ceaſeth with their danger.

3. Add hereunto, (to ſhew you the reaſon of the Hypocrites ſelf-deceit) that he is one *that never practically ſaw the amiableneſs of holineſs in it ſelf*; and never had a *heart* that was *touched* with the *love of it* by the Spirit of holineſs: and there-

therefore he taketh it but for *meer neceſſity*: and therefore he taketh up *no more* then he thinks is of *neceſſity* to ſave him from damnation, when he can live in the pleaſures of the world no longer. God never had his *heart*. He had *rather* be about his ſports or worldly buſineſs, if he *durſt*, and thought he could be ſo excuſed. He *loveth* a pair of Cards, or Dice, or a Harlot, or his ambitious deſigns and honours, better then he *loveth* the holy Scriptures, and the heavenly diſcourſe or contemplation of the life to come. And therefore he will have *no more* Religion then *needs he muſt*, becauſe he taketh it not for *love* but *need*. The matters of the world and the fleſh are his *dyet*, and his extraordinary ſucceſſes and proſperity are his *feaſt*: and therefore he will take as much of *them* as he *can* and *dare*: But *Religion* is but his *Phyſick*:

ſick: and therefore he will take it as *little* and *ſeldom* as he dare. Had he but ſeen the face of God by faith, and had he but the heart of a true believer, that is ſuited by holyneſs to the holy works that God commandeth, as the heart of a true friend is ſuited to the will of him whom he loveth, he would then be no longer *Religious againſt his will*, and conſequently *in Vain*; but he would think the moſt pure and heavenly mind, and life, and the higheſt degree of love and holineſs, to be the *beſt and moſt deſirable* ſtate for his ſoul, as every true believer doth. Had this Hypocrite any *true love* to *God*, as he deceitfully pretends to have, he would *love* his *Image*, and *Word*, and *wayes*; and then he would love beſt that *kernel* and *marrow* of Religion, that *life* and *ſoul* of worſhip and obedience, which now he *ſavoureth* not, but *ſhifteth off* as a needleſs,

needleſs, or tedious, or unattainable thing.

The nature and uſe of theſe *Hypocrites Religion*, is to *ſave them from Religion*: They carry an *empty guilded ſcabberd*, accuſing the *ſword* of a *dangerous keenneſs*, as a thing more *perillous*, then *neceſſary* to their uſe. When they ſeem moſt zealous, they are but *ſerving God that they may be excuſed from ſerving him*; and they *worſhip* him, of purpoſe to *ſhift off his worſhip*. They offer him the *lips*, that the *heart* may be *excuſed*: and complement him with *cap and knee*, that they may excuſe themſelves from *real holineſs*: They offer him the *empty purſe*, for payment; and tender him a *ſacrifice* of *huſks* and *ſhells*, and *lifeleſs carkaſſes*: They will *abound* in the *ſhadow* and *ceremony*, that they may be excuſed from the *ſpiritual life and ſubſtance*. Alas, *that dead hearted*

hearted hypocrite that *ſits there* and heareth all this, is ſo great a ſtranger to the *opening of the heart*, and the *deep entertainment* of ſaving truth, and to the *ſavoury reliſh* of the ſearching, healing, quickening paſſages of holy doctrine, and to the *thankfull welcoming* of an offered Chriſt, and to the *lookings* and *longings* of the ſoul after God, and to the *ſerious deſires*, and *hopes*, and *labours* of a gracious ſoul for life eternal, that he is *idle*, *aſleep*, and *dead*, as to all this *ſpiritual work*; and if he had not ſome *cuſtomary ſervice* to perform, and ſome *ceremonies* or *external* task to do, and ſome *bodily worſhip* to be employed in, he would find little or nothing to do in the Aſſemblies, but might ſit here as a bruit, or as one of a ſtrange language, that comes but to ſee and to be ſeen. And therefore if there be not ſomewhat more

more *ſuitable* to him then *power* and *ſpirituality*, it ſeemeth as *no worſhip* to the formal hypocrite: It is the pretty jingles and knacks of wit, and the merry jears at the preciſer ſort, or ſome ſcraps of Greek and Latin Authors, or ſhreds of Fathers or Philoſophy, or at beſt an accurate well ſet ſpeech, that makes the Sermon good and acceptable to this hypocrites ears. It is not *ſpirit and life within him*, that brought him hither; nor is it *ſpirit and life* that he *ſavoureth* and that *he came* for. And therefore it is that this ſort of hypocrites, are uſually moſt impatient of a *miſplaced word*, or of a worſhip performed in the *primitive ſimplicity*. If a man *deliver* the Lords Supper but as *Chriſt did*, and *receive* it but as the *Apoſtles* did, or ſerve God but as the *Churches in their dayes*, he will ſeem unreverent, and ſlovenly and ſordid

ſordid to theſe ſelf-deceiving Formaliſts. They are ſet upon *exceſs* of *ceremonies*, becauſe they are *defective* in the *vital* parts, and ſhould have *no Religion* if they had not *this*. All ſober Chriſtians are friends to *outward decency* and *order*: But its the empty ſelf-deceiver that is moſt for the unwarrantable *inventions* of *men*, and ſticketh in the bark of Gods own Ordinances: that taketh the garments for the man, and uſeth the worſhip of God but as a Maſque or Poppet play, where there's *great doings*, with *little life*, and to *little purpoſe*. The *chaſteſt* woman will *waſh* her face; but its the *harlot*, or *wanton*, or *deformed* that will *paint* it. The *ſobereſt* and the *comelyeſt* will avoid a *naſty* or *ridiculous* habit, which may make them *ſeem* uncomely, when they *are not*: But a *curious dreſs*, and *exceſſive care*, doth ſignifie a *crooked*

or

or *deformed body*, or a filthy skin, or which is worſe, *an empty ſoul*, that hath *need* of ſuch a covering. Conſciouſneſs of ſuch *greater want*, doth cauſe them to ſeek theſe poor ſupplies. The *gawdineſs* of mens Religion, is not the beſt ſign that it is *ſincere*. *Simplicity* is the ordinary attendant of *ſincerity*. It hath long been a proverb. [*The more ceremony, the leſs ſubſtance; and the more complement, the more craft.*]

And yet if it were only *for want* of inward true Religion, that the hypocrite ſetteth up his ſhews, it were (bad enough, but) not *ſo bad*, as with moſt of them, or all, it is. For it is an *enmity to Religion* that accompanyeth *their Religion*. As in lapſed man, the *body* that was before the ſouls *obedient attendant*, is become its *Maſter*, and the *enemy* of its perfection and felicity: ſo in the *carnal Religion* of

of the Hypocrite, the *outside*, which ſhould be the *ornament* and *attendant* of the *inward ſpiritual* part, hath got the *Maſtery*, and is uſed in an *enmity* againſt the more *noble* part which it ſhould *ſerve*: and much more are his *humane inventions* and *mixtures* thus deſtructively imployed. His bellows do but *blow out* the *candle*, under pretence of *kindling the fire*. He ſets the *body* againſt the *ſoul*, and ſometime the *cloathing* againſt both. He uſeth *forms* to the deſtruction of *knowledge*, and quenching of all *ſeriouſneſs* and fervour of affection. By *Preaching* he deſtroyeth *Preaching*; and *prayeth* till *prayer* is become no *prayer*, but the *image* or *carkaſs* of prayer at the beſt: And uſeth his *words* to the deſtruction of the due *Principle, ſenſe and ends*. Having ſtill his *carnal ſelf* for his *end*, he preacheth, and prayeth, and ſerveth God,

God, in a manner that ſeems moſt ſuitable to his *end*, ſo that it is not *Gods means* that he uſeth, when he uſeth them, but *his own:* Nor doth he indeed worſhip *God*, while he *ſeems* to worſhip him; nor *is indeed Religious*, but *ſeems Religious*. It is materially (perhaps) Gods work that he doth, and his *means* that he uſeth, but *Formally* they are his own, and not Gods at all; when we meet with abundance of our people that are moſt nimble in their accuſtomed forms, that know not what Religion, or Chriſtianity is, nor who Chriſt is, nor almoſt any of the ſubſtance of the Goſpel, it aſſures us that its eaſie to be Infidels with Chriſtian expreſſions in their mouths; and that its eaſier to teach a Parret to ſpeak, then to *be a man*. As their bodies are but the priſons, or dungeons of their ſouls, ſo their formal words and ceremonies are uſed

to

to be the priſon, and dungeon, or rather the grave of true devotion. Their Religion is *exceſſively laced*; but ſo ſcant of *cloth*, that it covereth not their nakedneſs, nor keeps them warm. Its *alwaies winter* with the hypocrite in his formal lifeleſs ſervices; and yet ſometime his *leaf* doth never fall. He is like the Box-tree that knows *no fruit*, and yet its *leaves* are alwayes green. Whereever his *heart* is, the Formaliſts *prayers* are always ready: For his *prayer-book* or *memory* is ſtill the ſame: He can *ſay* them between ſleeping and waking in his bed; and as he is dreſſing or waſhing him; and the interpoſition of a friend or ſome intervenient word or buſineſs, is ſo ſmall a rub, that it ſeldom puts him out of his way. Though he cannot make *Spiritual* his *common* buſineſs, he can make his *Spiritual* buſineſs *common*. Though he have not

not the art, the heart, to manage his trade or worldly buſineſs, with a holy and a heavenly mind; yet he can manage his *holyeſt* buſineſſes, with ſuch a mind as he doth his *trade*. If you would know whether he be praying or playing, Preaching or prating, ſerving God, or himſelf and the fleſh, you muſt not *ſearch deep* for an *internal* difference, but muſt diſcern it by the *ſhew* and *ſound of words*. He is not one of them that are *above ordinances*, as turning *every day* into a *Sabbath*, and *every thought* into a *prayer*, and *every morſel* into a *Sacrament*: But he can turn every *Sabbath* into a *common day*, and *every prayer* into *common thoughts*, and every *Sacrament* into *common food*: and therefore that which is *holy* to others, is to him *unclean*. *Hypocriſie* is a natural *Popery*: It filleth the places of *worſhip* with *Images*. Inſtead

of *prayer*, there's the *Image of prayer*: and instead of preaching, hearing, praising God, and other parts of worship, there is the *Image* of worship: and instead of *Christians*, *Believers*, *Saints* (and I was going to say, *of men*) there are so many *Images* of these. *Church-images* are usually handsomly *adorned*, and placed in a *posture* of *reverence* and *devotion*; and so are *they*. But *life* they have *none*, but meerly *natural*. They are *seeing*, *hearing*, *speaking Images*: but *Images* they are. They have *eyes*, but *see not*; *ears*, but *hear not*; *hearts*, but *understand not*.

And they are *enemies* to the life and power of Religion, in *others* as well as in *themselves*. The Publicans were not so bitter persecutors of Christ, as the Scribes and Pharisees were. He can *hate* and *reproach* the faithful by the *spirit*, though

though he cannot or will not *pray* by the *Spirit* : For he hath the *ſpirit of malignity*, though not the *Spirit of ſupplication*. He can *rail without book*, though he cannot *pray without book*. Were it as natural and eaſie to *be a Saint* as to *ſcorn a Saint*, and to *worſhip God in Spirit* and in truth, as to *hate* ſuch worſhip, the man might become a Saint yet before he dyes. But his *Vain Religion changeth* not his *nature*, and therefore *deſtroyeth* not his *ſerpentine enmity*, againſt the holy nature and practice of Believers : (though perhaps the *times* may *ſtop* his *hiſſing*, or hinder him from putting forth his ſting.) Theſe *Spiritual worſhippers*, and *heavenly diligent* ſort of Chriſtians, that make it the *main buſineſs* of their lives, to honour God and ſave their ſouls, are uſually the greateſt eye-ſore of the Formaliſt. Many a diſdainful thought he hath

of them; and many a bitter gird he gives them: (forgetting that their Redeemer heareth all; who is *coming With ten thouſands of his Saints, to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him*, Jud. 14. 15.) The humble, Spiritual, Heavenly Believers, are they that condemn the Hypocrite by their *lives*: were it not for *them*, he could eaſily believe that he is a *Saint himſelf*, and ſhall undoubtedly be ſaved. He looketh on the *openly ungodly*, but as the *beauty-ſpots* of the Aſſemblies, that ſerve to ſet out the piety of ſuch as *he*. If he ſaw *no better* then *himſelf*, he could eaſily take himſelf for *one* of the *beſt*. Every doted poſt and glow-worm, would be more reſplendent and obſervable,

obſervable, in the abſence of all greater lights. They hate the ſun for making their candle to be but a ſcarce-diſcerned fume. The *life* of a holy heavenly perſon, doth as much gall the conſcience of the Hypocrite, and proclaim his miſery, and bear a terrible witneſs againſt him, as a ſearching powerful Sermon doth. And therefore as it is a vexation to him to live under ſuch a *ſearching Miniſter*, as is alwayes rubbing on the galled place, and cauſing conſcience to torment him before his time; ſo is it a trouble to him to live among theſe *heavenly believers*, and to be dayly condemned by their *lives*, and galled by their *reproving practices*.

By this time you may ſee the *reaſon* and *uſe* of the Hypocrites Religion: The *ſelf-denying* part of Religion he cannot abide: The *life and power* of it is above him

and ſeems againſt him: The fears of hell and gripes of conſcience he cannot abide: *ſome hopes* of heaven *he muſt* have a while to keep him from deſpair: And therefore he *muſt* have *ſome Religion* to deceive his heart, and maintain his hopes. And therefore he fitteth his Religion to theſe uſes, and takes up with ſo much as will not much trouble him, or undo him in the world, or abſolutely forbid his ſinful pleaſures. And though ſometime he be *afraid* leſt the *power* and *life of godlineſs* will prove *neceſſary* to his ſalvation; yet he revives his *fainting* hopes, by running for comfort to his *lifeleſs form*. The reſt he hath no mind to; and therefore *will hope* to be ſaved without it, till his deceit have brought him to the place of deſperation, where there is *no hope*. As the *Merchant* in a ſtorm is loth to caſt his goods into the ſea, and therefore

therefore *hopes* he may ſave himſelf and them, till he and they are drowned together; or as a Patient that abhors his Phyſick, or loves ſome forbidden thing too well, is *hoping* ſtill that he may ſcape though he uſe the thing he loves, and forbear the medicine which he loathes, till he be paſt remedy, and he conſents too late; ſo is it often with the ſelf-deceiving Hypocrite: he loves not this ſtrict, and holy, and heavenly, and ſelf-denying life: and therefore he *will hope* that God will ſave him without it, as long as he is Religious in a way that he accounts more wiſe, and ſafe, and moderate, and comely, and ſuited to the nature and infirmity of man; Theſe are *his hopes*, and to *deceive* his *heart*, by *maintaining theſe*, it is that he is *Religious*: till either *Grace convert*, or *Juſtice apprehend* him, and his *hopes* and *he* are *ſwal-*

lowed up, by convincing flames and utter desperation.

IV. WE are next to shew you, in *what respect* it is that *this Religion* is called *Vain*. And first *Negatively*, it is not *Vain* to his own carnal ends, but to the true ends of Religion.

1. He intendeth by it the quieting of his own accusing conscience; and the keeping up his hopes of salvation, and keeping off the terrors of the Lord, and so consequentially the deceiving of his own heart; and to *these ends* its not in *Vain*. Here he sitteth as quietly as if all were well between God and him; and heareth the threatenings as securely as if they concerned not him at all; and applyeth the promises as boldly as if he were one of the heirs of promise: you would little think that

this

this man must shortly be *cast into utter darkness, from the presence of the Lord*, and have his *portion with Hypocrites*, Matth. 24. 51. His everlasting horrours *appear not now*, to *himself* upon his *heart*, nor to *others* in his *face*: what *sign* can you see of the *curse of the Law*, or the *wrath of God* in that mans countenance? what sign of his spiritual captivity and slavery, and of the load of sin that lyeth upon his soul, unless it be that *he feels it not*? what *sign* of a man in so great danger, of eternal torment, unless it be that he little feareth it? Doth he sit there like a man that is within a step of hell, and shall shortly be there with the Devil and his Angels, as sure as he is here, unless he be saved by that grace and holiness which he now resists? No: he is as confident to be saved as the preciselt of you all: he is as little troubled with the fears of

hell, or the wrath of God, as those that are discharged from it by Justification; and perhaps much less. For all this he is beholden to his *Vain Religion*, that in the point of self-deceiving is not *Vain*. As solid evidences promote the comforts of true believers; so this superficial kind of Religion promoteth the present peace of the presumptuous.

2. This *Religion* is not *Vain* as to the frustrating of all the means of grace, and hindering the conversion and Salvation of the Hypocrite. This is his armour of defence against the *sword of the Spirit*, that would pierce his heart, and let out his close corruption, and separate him from his beloved sin. What tell you him of *Repentance* and *Conversion*? He thinks he needeth no *Conversion*, or is converted long ago! what! is he *not a Christian*, a *Protestant*, a *Religious*

ligious man? Tell ſwearers, and curſers, and drunkards, and extortioners, and cruel Land-lords, and fornicators, of *Converſion*: tell *theſe* that they are *ſlaves of Satan*, and *under the wrath and curſe of God*, that are *indeed* ſo, paſt all controverſie: but tell not *him* of it, that makes no doubt but he is a member of Chriſt, a Child of God, and an heir of heaven. He loveth to hear a Miniſter rouze up the prophane and groſſely ſenſual offendors, and ſeems in pitty to wiſh for their converſion, and perhaps will exhort them to turn and mend their lives himſelf. But he little thinks that *he* is *faſter* in the priſon of Satan then *they*, and that he is himſelf in the ſame condemnation.

Do you go about to tell him of the neceſſity of the fear of God, and of loving him above all, and of truſting him, and ſerving him as

our

our only Lord? Why, all this he will confeſs, and perhaps is as forward to ſay as you, and verily thinks that he is one that doth it: you may aſſoon make him believe, that he is not an *Engliſh man*, as that he is not a *Chriſtian*: and that he loveth not *himſelf*, as that he loveth not *God*: even while he liveth not to think of him, to ſpeak of him, to call upon him, to obey him; while he loveth not his word, his waies or ſervants; or while he loveth the world and the pleaſures of ſin more heartily, and ſeeketh them more eagerly, and cleaveth to them more tenaciouſly; yet if you would perſwade him that he hath not a heart as true to God as any of you all, you will loſe your labour. Do you tell *him* of *hypocriſie?* he will tell you that its the thing he *hateth*: *who* ſpeaks againſt it more then *he*? And becauſe the world ſhall *ſee* he

is

is no Hypocrite, he will call them all *Hypocrites* that are faithful to God and to their ſouls, and will not ſit down in his truely-hypocritical *Vain* Religion, but will be more holy and diligent then he. What can you ſay to ſuch a man in order to his converſion, which his *ſelf-deceiving Religion* will not fruſtrate? Do you tell him of *hell fire*, and of the wrath of God againſt the *ungodly*? All this he can hear as calmly as another man; for he thinks that he is none of the *ungodly*, he hath ſcapt the danger; let them be afraid of it whom it doth concern. If you tell him of his *ſins*, he can tell you that *all men are ſinners*; *we are here imperfect*; and you ſhall never perſwade him that his raigning deadly ſins, are any other then ſuch *humane frailties* and *infirmities* as may ſtand with grace. Do you put him upon the inward practice of Religion;

and

and the fuller devoting of his ſoul to God, and the life of faith, and a heavenly mind? Hee'l tell you that in his meaſure, he doth all this already; though none of us are ſo good as we ſhould be: And his heart being unſeen to you, he thinks you *muſt believe* him. Do you blame him for his *ſlightneſs* and *Formality* in Religion, and put him upon a more *ſerious diligent* courſe, and to live as one that ſeeketh heaven with all his heart, and ſoul, and might? why he thinks you do but perſwade him to ſome ſelf-conceited over-zealous party, and draw him from his moderation, to be righteous overmuch; and to make too much ado with his Religion. Unleſs he be an Hypocrite that falleth into the *Schiſmatical* ſtrain: and then he will make a greater buſle with his *opinions* and his *outſide ſervices*, then you can deſire. So that *one* with

with his meer book-prayers, forms and ceremonies; and the *other* with his meer extemporate words, and affected outside seeming fervour; and both of them by a meer *Opinionative* lifeless carnal kind of Religion, subjected to their fleshly ends and interests, do so effectually cheat their souls, that they are armed against all that you can say or do, and you know not how to get within them, or fasten any saving truth upon their hearts.

3. This *Vain Religion* is not *Vain* as to the *preserving of his reputation in the world.* It saveth him from being numbered with the filthy rabble, and from being pointed at as notoriously vicious, or branded with the disgraceful characters of the scandalous. Men say not of him, There goeth a drunkard, a swearer, a curser, a fornicator, or a prophane ungodly wretch. He may be esteemed civil

civil, ingenuous, diſcreet, and perhaps Religious, and be much honoured by wiſe religious men: Though moſt commonly his formal, or opinionative, heartleſs kind of Religion, is diſcerned or much ſuſpected by experienced judicious Chriſtians, by his ſapleſs, unexperienced, common and carnal kind of diſcourſe and duty, ſticking moſt in opinions, parties, or ſome outſide things, and by his temporizing, and reſerved, and uneven kind of converſation; yet it is not *alwaies* ſo; but ſometime he is as far unſuſpected as the beſt: perhaps he may be eſteemed a Reverend Preacher, or a diſcreet Religious, well accompliſht Gentleman, and may be ſet in the head of Church or Commonwealth, as a leader of the Saints on earth, that ſhall be thruſt into the place of Hypocrites, and not come neer the meaneſt of the Saints in heaven.

4. Laſtly,

4. Laſtly, (but better then all this) his Religion is not *Vain* as to the good of others. He may by the perfume and odour of his gifts, be kept from ſtinking to the annoyance of others, while he is dead in ſin. He may be very ſerviceable in the Church of God: a judicious, earneſt expounder of the Scripture, and Preacher and defender of the truth: In his place as a Magiſtrate, or Maſter of a family, he may be a ſevere corrector of prophaneſs, and promoter of godlineſs; it being much eaſier to drive others from their ſin, then to forſake their own, and to drive on others to a godly life then to practiſe it themſelves: And by their owning godlineſs, and diſowning ſin, they perſwade themſelves the more effectually, that they are truely godly. The Church cannot well ſpare the gifts and ſervices of Hypocrites, and many ungodly men.

men. As, bad or ſick Phyſicians may be Gods inſtruments to cure our bodies, and a wicked Carpenter may make a good houſe; ſo a wicked Miniſter may well expound and apply the Scriptures; and he that *refuſeth* the grace of Chriſt, may prevail with others to *accept* it: The ſign poſt that ſtands out of dore it ſelf, may invite others into the houſe: and the hand upon a poſt that goes not one ſtep of the way, may point it out to others. There's more *ſelf-denyal* required to the forſaking of their *own* ſins, then to perſwade *others* to forſake *theirs*: A covetous man cares not how liberal others be; nor a glutton, drunkard, or fornicator, how temperate and chaſte his neighbours be. And hence it is that many of theſe, that refuſe a holy life themſelves, are willing their children or ſervants ſhould embrace it. The end of the ballance that goeth down

down it ſelf, doth cauſe the other to go up. Other mens ſouls are more beholden to Hypocrites then their own. They are like the common Mariners, that enrich the Merchant by fetching home his treaſure, when they have nothing but a poor maintenance themſelves: Or like Taylors that make garments for others which they never wear themſelves: Or like Carpenters that build fair houſes which they never dwell in. Or like the Cook that dreſſeth meat which he eateth not. God giveth Hypocrites their uſeful gifts, for the ſervice of the Church more then for themſelves. He ſometimes maketh thoſe to be nurſing Fathers to his Church, that are butchers of their own ſouls: and makes thoſe his inſtruments to undeceive others, that deceive themſelves. And thus far their Religion is not *Vain.*

But 1. It is *Vain* as to *Gods ſpecial acceptation*. True Religion pleaſeth God: but the ſelf-deceivers Religion he abhorreth. *He hath no pleaſure in fools*, Eccleſ. 5. 4. He asketh ſuch, *To what purpoſe is the multitude of their ſacrifices?* Iſa. 11. 11. and ſaith, he is *full of their burnt-offerings, and delights not in them?* when they come to appear before him, he asketh them, *Who required this at their hands, to tread in his Courts?* and bids them *bring no more vain oblations; incenſe is an abhomination to him: the calling of their aſſemblies he cannot away with, and their ſolemn meetings are iniquity*, ver. 12, 13. *Their appointed feaſts his ſoul hateth; they are a trouble to him; he is weary to bear them. When they ſpread forth their hands, he will hide his eyes; when they make many prayers, he will not hear*; becauſe they do not forſake their ſins,

ſins, *ver.* 14. Becauſe *they turn away their ear from hearing his law, their prayer is abhomination to him*; Prov. 28. 9. and 15. 8. and 21, 27. When they have *ſinned*, inſtead of repenting and forſaking it, they think to pleaſe God by their *Religion*, and ſtop the mouth of Juſtice with their *ſervices*; when as they do but provoke him more, by adding *Hypocriſie* to *iniquity*. Were they truly willing to let go their ſins, and to pleaſe God by univerſal obedience, he would willingly accept them, and be pleaſed with their ſervices. But when mens Religion, their prayers and other duties, are not uſed againſt their ſins, but for them, nor to kill them, but to cover them, nor to overcome them, but as it were to bribe God to give them leave to ſin, becauſe they are not willing to forſake it, this is the ſelf-deceiving Religion of Hypocrites, that is in *Vain*.

2. And

2. And *this Religion* is in *Vain*, as to any promoting of a work of Sanctification upon his ſoul. It weaneth him not from the world: It crucifieth not the fleſh with its affections and luſts: It doth not further his ſelf-denyal; nor driveth him to Chriſt, by a faith unfaigned: It never raiſeth him to a heavenly life; nor kindleth the love of God within him: It is dead and uneffectual, and cannot produce theſe high effects. Yea on the contrary, it hardeneth him in ſin and ſelf-deceit: it hindereth his repentance: it emboldeneth him in his fleſhly worldly life: and quieteth him in the neglect of Chriſt and heaven.

3. Moreover this kind of Religion is in *Vain* as to any ſolid peace of conſcience. It affordeth him none of the well-grounded, dureable comforts of the Saints: But on the contrary keeps out ſo-

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lid comfort, by feeding him with aery delusory conceits; and maketh him to be but his *own* comforter, upon fancies and confidence of his own, when the Spirit of Christ is not his comforter, nor doth the Word of God speak any peace at all unto him.

4. Lastly, his Religion is in *Vain* as to his Salvation. As he had but an image of true Religion, so he shall have but an image of Heaven. Some dreams and self-created hopes of happiness, may accompany him to the door of eternity: but there they will leave him to everlasting horrour.

V. *Use* 1. FRom what hath been said, you may see the reason why an outside formal seeming Religiousness, is a thing so common in the world, in comparison of the life and power of godliness.

lineſs. It is an eaſier thing to bring men to the ſtricteſt opinion, then to bring them to the affectionate and deep reception and practice of the truth. A ſtrict opinion may be held without any great coſt and trouble to the fleſh. It is the *practice* that bereaveth a ſinner of the pleaſure of his ſin. It is the common trick by which moſt Hypocrites cheat their ſouls, to turn to the ſide and *opinion*, and *aſſemblies* and *company* which they think to be the beſt; that ſo they may perſwade themſelves the more eaſily, that they are as good as thoſe opinions and that company doth import, and that they are truely ſuch as thoſe they joyn with. As men are taken by others for ſuch, as thoſe they correſpond with; ſo hypocrites take themſelves for ſuch. As if it would prove that a man is ſound, becauſe he dwelleth with them that are ſo?

Or

Or as if it would prove a man rich or honourable, that he converſeth with ſuch? As God will not ſave any Nations on earth, becauſe they are ſuch Nations; nor will he ſave men becauſe they are of ſuch or ſuch a trade, or becauſe they are skilled in this or that art or ſcience; no more will he ſave men for being of this or that party or ſect, in matters of Religion. One thinks, when he hath lived a fleſhly life, that he ſhall be ſaved for hearing or ſaying the Common-prayer, or becauſe he is for Prelacy and Ceremonies: another thinks he ſhall be ſaved, becauſe he can pray without a book, or form of words, or becauſe he frequenteth the private meetings, of thoſe that more diligently redeem their time, for ſpiritual advantages then others do: another thinks he ſhall be ſaved becauſe he is mocked as a Puritan or as too ſtrict, as others are

that are ſerious believers, and diligent in the things of God: and another thinks that he ſhall be ſaved becauſe he is rebaptized, or becauſe he joyneth with ſome ſeparating Congregation, which pretendeth to be more ſtrict then others. But none ſhall be ſaved, on any ſuch account as theſe. *Cain* could not be ſaved, for being the firſt born in the family of *Adam*: *Cham* could not be ſaved for being in the Ark and family of *Noah*: Nor *Eſau* for being in the houſe of *Iſaac*: Nor *Abſalom* for being the ſon of *David*: Nor *Judas* for being a Diſciple in the family of Chriſt. Even *Mary* that brought him forth, could not have been ſaved by him, if ſhe had not had a better title; and had not bore him in her heart, *Mark.* 3. 34, 35. when they talk to him of his Mother and his brethren, Chriſt looked upon thoſe that ſate about him,

and

and told them that Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is his Brother, his Sister, and his Mother. It is no outward badge and livery, but a heart-title, that must prove you the heirs of heaven. You may be snatcht out of the purest Church on earth, and from the purest ordinances, and out of the arms of the most upright Christians, and cast into hell, if you have no better evidences then such, to shew for your salvation. If ever you be saved, it must not be because you are Papists, or Protestants, Lutherans, or Calvinists, Arminians, Antinomians, Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyterian, or Prelatical; formally and meerly as such: But because you are true Christians, that have the Spirit of Christ, (*Rom.* 8. 9.) and are conformed to him, in his sufferings, death and resurrection, and live in sincere

obedience to his will. But Hypocrites that want the inward life and power of Religion, and are conscious of their willfull sins, would fain borrow something from the parties which they joyn with, or the opinions which they take up, or the formal outward worship which they perform, or the alms which they give, to make up the want, and cheat their souls with a self-created confidence, that they shall be saved.

But more specially you may hence observe, the reason that Popery hath so many followers, and that it is so easie a thing to make an Infidel, or whoremonger, or drunkard, to turn a Papist, when yet it is not easie to bring them to faith, and chastity, and temperance, much less to the unfeigned love of God, and to a holy heavenly life. Though I doubt not but there are many sincere-

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hearted Christians among the Papists, yet Popery it self is of an hypocritical strain, and is notably suited to the Hypocrites disposition. It is revived Pharisaisme: I marvel that they tremble not when they read themselves so lively characterized by Christ, with the addition of so many terrible woes, as in *Matth.* 23. and other places frequently they are: [Woe to you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites.] They bind heavy burdens of external observances, to lay upon the consciences of their Proselytes: They make broad their Phylacteries; and in variety of holy vestures, they make ostentation of such a Religion, as a Peacock may have when he spreads his tail. They contend for superiority and titles, to be called Rabbi, Pope, Cardinal, Patriarck, Primate, Metropolitane, Archbishop, Diocesane, Abbot,

Prior, Father, &c. to the great disturbance of all the Nations of the Christian world. They must needs be the Fathers and Masters of our faith: They shut up the Kingdom of heaven against the people, forbidding all to read the Scriptures in their vulgar tongue, without a special license from their Ordinary: and commanding them to worship God in a strange tongue which they do not understand: By the numbers of their Masses and prayers for the dead, they delude the souls, and devour the Patrimony of the living. In Temples, and Altars, and Images, and Ornaments consisteth no small part of their Religion: They make more of tything mint, anise and cummin, then of judgement, mercy, and faith, the weightier matters of the Law. The outside they make clean, and appear as beautiful to men, as ceremonies and outward

outward pompe can make them. They make it a part of their Religion to murder the living Saints, and keep holy dayes for the dead: They build the Tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the Sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had lived in the dayes of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets. Thus *Matth.* 23. is their description. They have their Touch not, taste not, handle not, after the commandements and doctrines of men, their voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, and other rudiments of the world, and things that have a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh, *Col.* 2. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. How easie a thing is it to bring an ungodly man to be of a Religion that consisteth in

ſuch things as theſe ? in eating fiſh on certain dayes in ſtead of fleſh; in ſaying over ſo many Pater Noſters, and Ave Maries, and naming ſo oft the name of Jeſu: in worſhipping a piece of conſecrated bread with divine worſhip; in bowing and praying before an Image: in praying to the ſouls of ſuch as the Pope tells them are Saints in heaven: in croſſing themſelves, and being ſprinkled with holy water, and uſing *agnus dei's*, and conſecrated grains and amulets: in dropping of beads: in ſaying ſuch words as a prayer at ſuch a canonical hour, and ſuch words at the next canonical hour: in hearing a Maſſe in Latine; and ſaying a Latine prayer: in being anointed with hallowed oyl, & burning hallowed candles on the Altars by day-light: in going ſo many miles to the Chappel of a Saint in Pilgrimage: in carrying about them

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a bone, or ſome other ſuppoſed relict of a ſuppoſed Saint. In confeſſing their ſins ſo often to a Prieſt, and doing penance, if he impoſe it on them. And ſo while they live in whoredom, or drunkenneſs, or ſwearing, or lying, or all theſe, and many other ſuch, it is but confeſſing and doing penance, and to it again; on which account (whatever ſome of them ſay for the neceſſity of contrition) it is uſual with them, to venture upon the ſins of whoredom, drunkenneſs and the reſt, becauſe they have ſo eaſie and cheap a remedy at hand. And therefore I wonder not that among Infidels (who after Baptiſm, Apoſtatize to deny the holy Scriptures, and the immortality of the ſoul, and the life to come,) and among common ſwearers, and curſers, and whoremongers, and drunkards, the Papiſts find their labours moſt ſucceſſeful, and that no fiſh

will ſo eaſily take their bait: Nor do I wonder that it is a point of the Popiſh faith, that none but the Children of the Devil, that are void of the love of God, and are unjuſtified, can poſſibly turn Papiſts. (For they tell us that all are ſuch till they are Papiſts: ſaving that they are many of them for the ſalvation of heathens.) A poor wretch that is captivated to his odious luſts, and goes under a galled accuſing conſcience, will be content to take a Popiſh cure, and quiet his ſoul with a few compliments and formalities. But to bring one of theſe men to a through converſion, to a true humiliation, to a deep hatred of all ſin, and a love of holineſs, to cloſe with Chriſt as his only refuge from the wrath of God, and to give up himſelf without any reſervation, and all that he hath, to the will and ſervice of the Lord: to love God

as

as his portion, and the infinite tranſcendent good; to take all the honour and riches of the world as loſs and dung, and uſe all in due ſubſerviency to everlaſting happineſs; to crucifie the fleſh, and mortifie all his earthly inclinations, and live a life of ſelf-denyal, and to walk with God, and ſerve him as a Spirit in ſpirit and in truth, and to keep a watch over thoughts, affections, words and deeds; to live by faith upon a world and happineſs that is to us unſeen; and to live in preparation for their death, and wait in hope to live with Chriſt; this is Chriſtianity and true Religion; and this is it that they will not ſo eaſily be brought to. Its eaſier to make an hundred Papiſts, then one true regenerate Chriſtian. Children can make them a baby of clouts: And the ſtatuary can make a man of Alabaſter or ſtone: But none

can

can give life, which is essential to a man indeed, but God. There needeth the Spirit of the living God, by a supernatural operation, and a kind of new creation, to make a man a real holy Christian. But to bring a man to make such a congee, or wear such a vesture, or say such and such words, and make to himself a mimical Religion, this may be done without any such supernatural work. O therefore take heed of cheating your souls by hypocritical formalities, instead of the life and power of Religion.

Use 2. AND now, O that the Lord of life, would help me so to apply this truth, and help you so to apply it to your selves, that it might be as a light set up in the Assembly and in all your consciences, to undeceive the miserable self-deceivers, and to bring

bring poor Hypocrites into ſome better acquaintance with themſelves, and to turn their *ſeeming Vain* Religion, into that which is real and ſerious and ſaving!

And now I am to ſearch and convince the Hypocrite, I could almoſt wiſh that all the upright tender ſouls that are cauſeleſly in doubt of their own ſincerity, were out of the congregation, leſt they ſhould miſapply the *Hypocrites* portion to *themſelves*, and think it is *their* caſe that I am deſcribing: as it is uſual with ignorant patients, eſpecially if they be a little melancholy, when they hear or read the deſcription of many dangerous diſeaſes, to think that all or ſome of them are theirs, becauſe they have ſome ſymptomes very like to ſome of thoſe which they hear or read of. Or leſt their *fearful* ſouls ſhould be *too much terrified*, by hearing of the miſery

of

of the Hypocrite; as a fearful child that's innocent, will cry, when he ſees another whipt that's faulty. But if *thou wilt* ſtay and hear the Hypocrites examination, I charge thee, poor humbled drooping ſoul, that thou do not *miſunderſtand* me, nor think that I am ſpeaking thoſe things to *thee*, that are meant to the *falſhearted enemies of the Lord*! and do not imagine that *thou art condemned in his condemnation*; nor put not thy ſelf under the ſtroaks that are given *him*: but rejoyce that thou art ſaved from this ſtate of *ſelf-deceit* and miſery. And that thou mayſt have ſome ſhelter for thy conſcience againſt the ſtorm that muſt fall on others, look back on the foregoing deſcription of the Hypocrite, and thou mayſt find that thou haſt the ſaving graces, which I there diſcovered him to want. Let theſe at preſent be before thine eyes, and tell thee,

Thou

Thou art not the perſon that I mean.

1. Thou art humbled to a *loathing of thy ſelf* for thy tranſgreſſions.

2. Thou art willing to give up thy ſelf to Chriſt, without reſerve, that as thy Saviour, he may cure thy miſerable ſoul, upon his own terms.

3. The favour of God is dearer to thee then the favour of the world, or the pleaſures and proſperity of ſinners: and thou longeſt more to love him better, and to feel his love, then for any of the honours or advancements that fleſh and blood deſire.

4. It is the life to come that thou takeſt for thy portion, and prefereſt before the matters of this tranſitory life.

5. Thy Religion employeth thee about thy *heart*, as much as about the *out ſide* and *appearing* part: It

is

is *heart-ſins* that thou obſerveſt and lamenteſt, and a *better heart* that thou daily longeſt, and prayeſt, and laboureſt for.

6. Thou liveſt not in any *groſs and deadly ſin*; and thou haſt *no infirmity* but what thou longeſt and laboureſt to be rid of; and goeſt on in the uſe of Chriſts holy means and remedies for a cure.

7. Thou diſlikeſt not the *higheſt degree of holineſs*, but loveſt it and longeſt after it, and hadſt rather be *more holy* then be *more honourable* or *more rich*.

8. Thou unfeignedly loveſt the image of Chriſt on the ſouls of all his ſervants where thou canſt diſcern it; and ſeeſt a ſpecial excellency in a poor humble heavenly Chriſtian, though never ſo low or deſpicable in the world, above all the pompe and ſplendor of the earth; and thou loveſt them with a ſpecial love; and the *holier* they are

are, the *better* doſt thou love them.

9. Thou loveſt the moſt convincing ſearching Sermons, and wouldeſt fain have help to know the worſt that is in thy heart; and comeſt unto the light that thy heart and deeds may be made manifeſt.

10. All this is the *bent* and *byas* of thy *ſoul*; thy *habituated, ordinary* caſe; though there be not alway the ſame *opportunity* for the *acts*, nor the ſame *degree* of *life* in *acting*: It is not only a *good mood* that thou art *frightened* into by ſome affliction, and then returneſt to thy carnal courſe of life again: But thou *heartily continueſt* thy *conſent* to the *Covenant* which thou haſt made with Chriſt, and wouldeſt not turn back to a worldly, carnal, or a formal life, nor change thy Maſter, nor forſake the holy courſe which thou art engaged in for all the world. This

This is the truth of thy caſe, poor doubting troubled Chriſtian: Thou canſt not deny it without much injury to thy ſelf and God. And therefore be not now troubled at that which I ſhall ſay to the ſelf-deceivers.

And now I am to ſpeak to the *ſelf-deceiver*, I perceive my task to be exceeding difficult: To get *within him* that is ſo *guarded*: and to pierce his heart that is ſo armed: and to open his eyes that is willing to be blind: and to undeceive him that hath been ſo long deceived, and that ſtudyeth to deceive himſelf, and is engaged in that unhappy work, by ſuch ſubtil enemies that further his deceit, and by ſo many allurements, and ſuch ſtrong corruptions, and by a ſeeming neceſſity for the quieting of his conſcience; all this is not an eaſie work. But we muſt attempt it, and leave the ſucceſs to grace.

And

And first let me solemnly profess before you all, (for the removing of your prejudice, and the calming of your resisting hearts) that it is none of my desire by the discovery of your hypocrisie, to shame you before others, or to make you seem more miserable then you are, or to disturbe and grieve you any more then is necessary to the escaping of your exceeding danger, and then your own salvation and comforts do require. But when we *know* that Religion is your *business* in the world; and that an endless world shall presently receive you; and that *Christ is coming*; and your souls are ready to quit their residence, and take their leave of your flesh till the resurrection; and when we *know* that hypocrisie and self-deceit, is the thing that you are most in danger of, and that you must be saved from it, or be

be in hell for ever; and that the enemies of your ſouls will do all they can, to keep their poſſeſſion in peace, and to continue your deceit till you are paſt remedy; what would you have us do in ſuch a caſe? would you wiſh us to be ſilent, and betray your ſouls, and damn our own, for fear of diſquieting and diſpleaſing you? How hard are your hearts, if you would wiſh us to do thus!

Be awakened therefore O all ye ſelf-deceivers, and know that Hypocriſie as the Harlots paint, is but a baſe and borrowed beauty, that will vaniſh away when you draw neer the fire; and that ſelf-deceit will quiet you ſo ſhort a time, that it's as good let go your deluſory peace and comfortable dream to day as to morrow: And its better now begin and examine your ſelves, then ſtay till the dreadful Judge examine you, who

is

is even at the door! The discovery of your case is the one half of your cure: And as you have been your own deceivers, let us in Justice find you so equitable to your selves, as to be willing of the light that must undeceive you; and to go along with us into your consciences, and help us in the search, and impartially pass a *preventing* judgement, that Christ may not pass a *condemning* judgement.

And in order to your conviction and recovery, I shall first acquaint you with *your misery*, that so it may awaken you to look about you, while there is time and hope. If it were Gods way to work by ocular demonstrations, and the Christian life were a life of sense, and you had heaven and hell this hour open to your sight, how little need should I have to plead this cause with you any further? you would then see and hear that vengeance

vengeance that would awake you; and make you presently fly into your hearts, and charge conscience to deal impartially with you, lest self-deceit should bring you to those flames. But its a *life of faith* that we are to call you to, and a *word of faith* that we have to preach; but of things that are as sure as if you saw them.

And, 1. If thy *Religion* be *Vain*, thy *hopes and comforts* that are built upon it, are all but *Vain*. How *Vain* is that *hope* that will vanish when the *enjoyment* is expected, and will end in endless desperation? what though thou sit here with so great hopes and confidence of salvation, as maketh thee even scorn the man that questions it? Art thou ever the better when death awaketh thee, and thy confident dream is at an end? when thou art *dying*, wilt thou *hope*? perhaps thou mayst: But when thou art *burning*,

burning, wilt thou *hope?* when thou art *tormented*, wilt thou *hope?* *Desperation* will then be essential to thy misery. The Devils that now feed thy *hope* by their deceits, will then as readily keep awake thy conscience, and exasperate thy despairing soul. If now thou wilt hope under the *threatenings* of God (that thou mayst be saved in thy present state) wilt thou then *hope* under his *execution?* Thy flatterers and prosperity may cherish thy deceitful hopes for a time; but who will maintain them, when God commandeth desperation to torment thee? *Job* 27. 8, 9 [*For what is the hope of the Hypocrite though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?*] As *Sands* turns it.

What

What hope hath the prevailing Hypocrite,
When God shall chase his soul to endless night?
Will God relieve him in his agonies?
Or from the depth of sorrows hear his cryes?

His worldly glory will then *desert* him, and leave him to the fruit of *his deserts*: His *fruition* will perish with his *hopes*, Job 27. 22, 23. [*For God shall cast upon him and not spare: he would fain flee out of his hand. Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place*: Or as *Sands* turneth it;

God shall transfix him with his winged dart:
Though he avoid him like the flying Hart.

Men

Men shall pursue with merited disgrace:
Hiss, clap their hands, and from his Country chase.

Hopes that are buist by self-deceit, have no foundation, but sand and waters, and in tryal they will fall, and their fall will be great and terrible; *Matth.* 7. 23, 24. *Job* 8. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. [*Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water? whilst it is yet in its greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb: So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrites hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure,*] Or,

Can bull-rushes but by the rivers grow?
Can flags there flourish where no waters flow?
Yet they, when green, when yet untoucht, of all
That cloath the spring, first hang their heads, and fall.
So double-hearted Hypocrites; so they
Who God forget, shall in their prime decay.
Their aery hopes, as brittle, as the thin
And subtile webs, which toyling spiders spin.
Their houses full of wealth and ryot, shall
Deceive their trust, and crush them in their fall, &c.

Job 36. 13. [*The Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath: they cry not when he bindeth them.*] Or as the Paraphrase,

Fa

For the deluder haſtens his own fall,
Nor will in trouble on the Almighty call.
Who on the beds of ſin ſupinely lie,
They in the ſummer of their age ſhall die.

And what we ſay of the *Hypocrites hope*, we may ſay alſo of all his *pleaſures and delights*. He may now be as merry as the moſt righteous of his neighbours; and ſeem the moſt happy, becauſe the moſt jocund; and abound with medicines againſt melancholy and all wiſe and ſober conſideration; even his buſineſs, his cups, his wantonneſs and uncleanneſs, or at leaſt his leſs diſgracefull pleaſures and recreations, which fortifie his mind againſt the fears of death and judgement, and all the threatenings of God;

As ſleepy Opium fortifies the brain,
Againſt the ſenſe of ſickneſſes and
pain.

And if this mirth could alwaies laſt, how happy a man were the ſelf-deceiver? But ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 7. 6. *As the crackling of thorns under a pot, ſo is the laughter of the fool.*

As thorns beneath a Caldron catch
the fire,
Blaze with a noiſe, and ſuddenly ex-
pire;
Such is the canſeleſs laughter of
vain fools;
This vanity in their diſtemper
rules.

And as *Job* 20. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. [*Knoweſt thou not this of old ſince man was placed upon earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort,*

and

and the joy of the Hypocrite for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reacheth to the clouds; yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung; they which have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall flee away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea he shall be chased away as a vision of the night. The eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him:] Or as the foresaid Paraphrase,

This is a truth which with the world began,
Since earth was first inhabited by man;
Sins triumph in swift misery concludes,
And flattering joy the Hypocrite deludes.

Although his excellence to heaven aſpire;
Though radiant beams his ſhining brows attire;
He as his dung ſhall periſh on the ground;
Nor ſhall th' impreſſion of his ſteps be found;
But like a troubled dream ſhall take his flight;
And vaniſh as a viſion of the night.
No mortal eye ſhall ſee his face again,
Nor ſumptuous roofes their builder entertain.

Thus as the *Hypocrites Religion* is *Vain*, ſo all his *hopes* and *joyes* will be *vain*, and will *deceive* him as he *deceiv'd* himſelf. As *Zophar* concludeth of him, *Job* 11. 20. [*But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape: and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the Ghoſt.*]

Poor ſoul, thy *Religion* is *already* ſo *vain*, that it giveth thee no *ſolid* ſatisfaction or delight: Thou art fain to go to thy lands, or friends, or pleaſures, or carnal accomodations for delight: Thy *Religion*, which ſhould let thee into heaven, and there refreſh thee with the foretaſts of everlaſting pleaſures, and ſhould daily fetch thee freſh delights, from the face of God, alas is an impotent lifeleſs thing; acquainted with ſhadows, but ſtrange to the inviſible ſubſtance; acquainted with formal ſhews and ceremonies, but unacquainted with *God*: acquainted with the letter, but not with the Spirit; familiar with the orders of the Churrh, but ſtrange to the foretaſts of heaven. If thou hadſt no other comfort, but what thy dead Religion brings thee from the face of God, thy penſive heart would be better diſpoſed to con-

ſideration and recovery, then it is. If thou hadſt a faith that brought thee in any ſolid ſtabliſhing content, what needſt thou be hunting abroad the world, among thy crowd of vanities and deceits, to beg or borrow ſome ſhort delight, which thou muſt return with griping uſury? And what needeſt thou ſo many pittiful ſhifts to muzzle thy conſcience, and to keep that peace a little longer, which will end in ſorrow, and will part with thee as the devil went out of the poſſeſſed perſon, *Mark* 9.26. that rent him, and left him as a dead man. *That Religion* is certainly *vain*, that is not ſufficient to acquaint the ſoul with matter of ſolid comfort and content, but leaves that felicitating work, to worldly tranſitory things, while it ſelf is uſed only as a skreen, to keep hell fire from ſcorching the conſcience, or as childrens rackets

to

to quiet them when they are apt to cry.

2. But the *vanity* of a *ſuperficial Religion*, will moſt appear in the hour of extremity; when their *help* as well as their *hope* and comfort will to them prove *vain*. Proſperity will not alway laſt: As ſure as winter followeth ſummer, and as the darkſome night ſucceeds the day, ſo ſure will adverſity take its turn: ſickneſs will follow the longeſt health; and death ſucceed the longeſt life; and your houſe of darkneſs in the duſt, will hold you longer then your preſent habitations. And then, when thou ſeeſt *all things fail*, O what wouldſt thou give for a *hope and help* that will *not fail*, that thou mighteſt be received into the everlaſting habitations? The conſcience that is now aſleep, will be ſhortly awakened in ſuch a manner, that it will be utterly paſt the

skill and power, of thy ſelf and all the friends thou haſt, to caſt it aſleep or quiet it again. And then, what wouldſt thou not give, for a lenitive to pacifie it! No wonder if *thou ſit here* as ſenſeleſs as if no harm were near thee: It is now in *thy power not to believe* that there is a *hell for hypocrites*, or that it is *thy own inheritance*: But the day is near (if a ſupernatural change prevent it not) when it ſhall no *more be in thy power*: but *ſight* and *feeling* ſhall convince thee whether thou wilt or no. *Now* we muſt *intreat* thy own conſideration, and ſolicite thee for thy own conſent, to know thy grievous ſin and miſery, and yet leave thee unconvinced, becauſe thou art unwilling to know the truth, and becauſe we cannot *ſhew* thee heaven and hell while we are ſpeaking of them: But *then* God will not *crave*, but *force* thy conſideration:

nor

nor will he *ask* thy *consent* to *feel* thy misery: but the less thou art willing, the more hast thou to feel. And which way then wilt thou look for *help*? which way ever it be, it will be all in *vain*, because thy *Religion* was but *vain*; wilt thou look to thy *duties* and supposed *honesty*, whose sincerity now thou art so confident of? Ah! this is the *vain Religion*, that thi[illegible] *deceive* thee, but cannot fin[illegible] thee. Thou art like a man *Re*[illegible] falling house, that hath nothing to lay hold on, but that n[illegible]ch is falling, and is it that will a[illegible]ak him unto death. Or like a [illegible]owning man that hath nothing but a handful of water to lay hold upon; which is it that will choak him, but is *vain* to save him. It is thy superficial hypocritical complemental services, that will fall with thee, and fall upon thee, that will thus both deceive thee, and

choak

choak thee, in the time of thy distress. To be told *now* that thy *Religion is vain*, is a thing that thy dead unbelieving heart can too easily bear: But to find then, when thou lookest for the benefit of it, that its *Vain*, is that which is not born so easily, but will overwhelm the stoutest heart with terrours. If thou were a man of *no Religion*, and so hadst none to deceive and quiet thee, all no couldst scarcely keep off thy- and rours *now*: If thou hadst not whe- hollow-hearted prayers, thy -cted zeal, or forms, and shews, we tasks of duty, thy profession, ra- its secret exceptions and reserv- own thy smoothed out-side, with the sin good conceit thou hast of thy self, and the good esteem that other men have of thee, if thou hadst not these to flatter thy conscience, and cloak thee from the storms of threatened wrath, thou wouldst

perhaps

perhaps walk about like another *Cain*, and be afraid of every man thou ſeeſt, and tremble at the ſhaking of a leaf, and ſtill look behind thee as afraid of a purſuit. But, alas, it will be ten thouſand times more terrible, to find thy confidence prove deceit, and thy *Religion vain*, when God is judging thee, when hell is before thee, and thou art come to the laſt of all thine expectations! Nay then to find not only that thy ſuperficial *Religion* was *vanity*, and lighter then vanity, nothing, and leſs then nothing; but that it was *thy ſin*, and that which will now *torment* thee, and the remembrance of it be to thee as the remembrance of drunkenneſs to the drunkard, and of fornication to the unclean, and of covetouſneſs to the worldling; the ruſt of whoſe money will eat his fleſh, and burn like fire: O what a doleful plight is this! when the

ſentence

ſentence is ready to paſs upon thee, and hell is gaping to devour thee, and thou lookeſt for *help* to thy *vain Religion*, and cryeſt out [O now, or never help: help me, or I am a fire-brand of unquenchable wrath: help me, or I muſt be tormented in thoſe flames: help me now, or it will be too late; and I ſhall never, never more have help] Then to have thy ſelf-deceit diſcovered, and thy *ſeeming* Religion condemn thee and torment thee, inſtead of *helping* thee, what anguiſh and confuſion will this caſt thy hopeleſs ſoul into? ſuch as no heart can here conceive. Thy guilty ſoul will be like a hare among a company of dogs: which ſo ever of thy duties thou flyeſt for help to, that will make firſt to tear thee and devour thee. Like a naked man in the midſt of an army of his deadly enemies: which ſo ever he flyeth to for pitty and relief,

lief, is like to be one of the firſt to wound him. Poor ſelf-deceiver! what wilt thou then do, or whither wilt thou betake thy ſoul for help? The reaſon why thou canſt now make ſhift with a lifeleſs ſhadow of Religion, is, becauſe thou haſt thy ſports or pleaſures, thy friends and flatterers, thy worldly buſineſs to divert thy thoughts, and take thee up, and rock the cradle of thy ſecurity; and thy *piety* is not yet brought unto the *fire*, nor thy heart and duties ſearched by the all-diſcovering light: But when the *light* comes in, and when all thy fleſhly contents are gone, and when thou comeſt to have *uſe* for thy Religion, and ſeeſt that if it prove unſound, thou art loſt for ever, O then it is not ſhadows, and ſhews, and complements that will quiet thee. That will not ſerve turn then, that ſerves turn now. Thou

wilt

wilt find then that it was easier deceiving thy *self* then God, *Gal.* 6. 3, 4, 5, 7. [*For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself: But let every man prove his own work—— For every man shall bear his own burden. Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: But he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*]

But perhaps thou wilt say, *It is not any duties but Christ that I must trust to: he will be my help, and he is sufficient, and will not deceive the soul that trusteth him.*

Answ. Undoubtedly *he is sufficient*, and *will not deceive thee.* But doth *he deceive thee*, if he give thee not the salvation which he *never promised* thee? He *never promised* salvation to an *Hypocrite* (with-

(without converſion) It is the upright ſoul devoted to him, that takes him for the abſolute Maſter of his life, and for his only portion and felicity, to whom Chriſt hath *promiſed* ſalvation: And his *promiſe* ſhall be made good, and the ſincere ſhall find that Chriſt deceives them not. But where did he ever *promiſe* ſalvation to a ſuperficial Phariſee? to ſuch a ſeeming Chriſtian as thou? ſhew ſuch a *promiſe* from him if thou canſt; and then truſt it and ſpare not. But thou doſt not *truſt him*, but thy *own deceit*, if he have given thee *no ſuch promiſe to truſt on.* Nay rather, ſhould he *not deceive all the world*, if he *ſhould ſave* ſuch ſuperficial hypocrites, when he hath profeſſed in his word that *he will not ſave them*? and if he *ſhould not condemn* ſuch heartleſs Formaliſts, when he hath ſo often told us that *he will condemn them*? Surely he

he that *breaks his word* is liker to be a *deceiver*, then he that *keepeth it*. Be it known to thee therefore (and O that thou wouldſt know it while there is a remedy at hand) that if thou truſt that Chriſt ſhould ſave an unſanctified falſ-hearted perſon, whoſe ſoul was never renewed and revived by the Holy Ghoſt, and abſolutely given up to God, and that ſetteth not up God and his ſervice above all the intereſt of the fleſh, and the commodities and contentments of the world, thou doſt not then *truſt Chriſt*, but thy *own deceits* and lyes: and it is not Chriſt that is the *deceiver*, but *thou art a deceiver of thy ſelf*, that makeſt thy ſelf a falſe promiſe, and truſteſt to it; and when thou haſt done, ſayſt, thou *wilt truſt to Chriſt*: yea *truſteſt thy ſelf againſt Chriſt*, and *truſteſt* that *he will break his word*, and not that *he will make it good*.

See

See whether he reſolve not to condemn all ſuch, *Matth.* 10. 37,38. *Luke* 14. 27, 33. *Matth.* 7. 26, 27. *Jam.* 2. 14. *Heb.* 12. 14. *Rom.* 8. 9. with the texts before cited, and abundance ſuch. Chriſt will be a *Saviour*; but he is the *Saviour of his body*, and not of the affixed hypocrites, *Eph.* 5. 23. And *his body* is *the Church* which is *ſubject to him*, ver. 24. *He will ſave to the utmoſt*: but whom? *even all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. but not thoſe that make the world their God, and would put God off with a few running heartleſs words and duties. It is the living fruitful branches that he will ſave: but the withered branches he caſteth forth, to be burned in the fire, *Joh.* 15. 2, 6, 7. *No man can ſerve God and Mammon*: nor live both to the *Spirit* and the *fleſh*: he that hath two hearts, hath none that's

accepta-

acceptable unto God: he that hath two faces (a face of devotion in his formal customary services, and a face that smiles on the world and fleshly pleasures when he hath done) hath none that God will ever smile upon. The *leaves* of the *barren fig-tree*, saved it not from the *curse* of Christ, *Matth.* 21. 18, 19. *Hew it down and cast it into the fire*, shall be the sentence of the most flourishing tree that's fruitless, *Luk.* 13. 7. [*The earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and bryers, is rejected, and is nigh to cursing, whose end is to be burned,*] Heb. 6. 7, 8. So that if thy *Religion be vain*, the blood of Christ, and all the treasures of his grace, will be *vain* to *thee*, that are *saving* unto *others*. An *Infidel* may then

as

as well expect to be ſaved by the Chriſt whom he *rejected*, as thou. Nay it is Chriſt himſelf that will *condemn* thee: It is his own mouth that will ſay to ſuch as thee, *Depart from me, ye that Work iniquity.* And though thou couldeſt ſay, [*Lord, Lord, I have Propheſied, or caſt out devils, or done many wonderful works in thy Name*] he [*will profeſs to thee that he never knew thee*] or owned thee, *Matth.* 7. 22, 23. If *crying* would then ſerve, I know thou wouldſt not ſpare thy cryes. But he muſt ſo pray as to be accepted and heard on earth, that looks to be accepted and regarded then; when the miſerable ſoul with endleſs horrours in its eye, is looking round about for *help*, and findeth none; when all the creatures ſay, *We cannot*, and he that *can* ſhall ſay, *I will not*; who can apprehend the calamity of ſuch a ſoul? What ſoul ſo

ſleepy

ſleepy and regardleſs now, that will not then cry, [*Lord, Lord open to us*] when the *door is ſhut*, and it is too late? *Matth.* 25. 10, 11, 12. *Then* if thou roar in the anguiſh of thy ſoul, and cry out to him that ſaveth others [Condemn me *not* O Lord, but ſave me alſo! Now Lord have mercy on a miſerable ſinner! ſave me, or I am loſt for ever: ſave me, or I muſt burn in yonder flames: Turn not thy heart againſt an undone periſhing ſoul, [If thou caſt me off, I have no hope!] A thouſand ſuch cryes would be in vain, becauſe thou hadſt but a *vain Religion*, Prov. 1. 24, &c. [*Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand and no man regarded, but ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof: I alſo will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as deſolation, and*

your

your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind; when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you: Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me:——Therefore they ſhall eat of their own Way, and be filled with their own devices] ſaith the Lord.

And when hell hath once taken thee into its poſſeſſion, if thou cry and roar there ten thouſand millions of ages, it will be all in *Vain*. Thy ſtrongeſt and thy longeſt cryes, cannot procure thee a drop of water, to cool thy tongue tormented in thoſe flames, *Luke* 16. 24, 25, 26.

In a word, if thy *Religion* be *Vain*, all's *Vain* to thee. Thy life it ſelf is *Vain*, Eccleſ. 6. 12. thou *walkeſt* in a *Vain ſhew*, Pſal. 39. 6. *Thou diſquieteſt thy ſelf in Vain*, in all thy labours, *Pſal.* 39. 6. and 127. 1, 2. and *vanity* and *vexation*

is

is all that thou ſhalt poſſeſs, *Eccleſ.* 1. 2, 14. *Prov.* 22. 8. And if conſcience, when thy day of grace is paſt, ſhall force thee upon the review to ſay, *My piety was but ſeeming and ſelf-deceit, and all my Religion was Vain*; it will be *the voice of utter deſperation, and will ſtab the heart of all thy hopes.* This and no better being the ſelf-deceivers caſe, is not conſcience now at work within you? and asking as each of the Diſciples did, *Mat.* 26. 24, 25. *Is it I?* If thou have a heart within thee, beſeeming a reaſonable creature, by this time thou art afraid of ſelf-deceit, and willing to be ſearched, and to know thy hypocriſie, while it may be cured. For my part, I ſhall pronounce no one of you perſonally to be an hypocrite, as knowing that hypocriſie is a ſin of the heart, which in it ſelf is ſeen by none but God and him that hath it: But my buſineſs

buſineſs is only to help ſuch to know and judge themſelves. Could I name the man to you in the Congregation, that had none but a *ſeeming vain Religion*, I am perſwaded you would all look upon him as a moſt unhappy deplorable wretch. Alas, ſirs, Hypocrites are not ſo rare among us, as ſome imagine. There are few or none, but *Saints* and *Hypocrites* in this Aſſembly, or in moſt of the Aſſemblies in the land. I think here are none that make not a *profeſſion of the Chriſtian faith*, and of *love to God*: All therefore that *have not* this *faith* and *love*, muſt needs be *Hypocrites*, as *profeſſing* to *be* what they *are not*. In your baptiſm you engaged and profeſt your ſelves the Diſciples of Chriſt, and gave up your ſelves in ſolemn Covenant to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt: This Covenant you will ſay you ſtand to yet: & none of you will

be known to have renounced your Christianity: As Christians you use to come to these Assemblies, and here to attend God in the use of his Ordinances: and some of you to renew your Covenant with him, in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. I meet with none that will say [I am no Christian, nor a servant of the God of Heaven: I am an Infidel, and Rebell against the Lord.] I think there is none of you, but would take it ill, if I should call you such, or should deny you to be Christians, and men fearing God.] If therefore you are not such indeed, you must needs be Hypocrites. What say you? Is there any of you that profess your selves to be *ungodly*, *unbelievers*, and *servants of the Devil*, and will take this as your current title, disclaiming the love and service of the Lord? I think you will not. If you are such as you profess,

you

you are all Saints, and ſhall be ſaved. If any of you be not ſuch, they can be nothing elſe but Hypocrites.

Seeing therefore that you are all either *Saints* or *Hypocrites*, come now to the bar, and refuſe not a tryal, that may prevent the terrors of another kind of tryal, that you cannot refuſe.

And here let me ſet before you your Profeſſion, and then try your ſelves, Whether you are ſuch as you profeſs your ſelves to be or not? And I think I may take it for granted, that the *Articles of the Creed*, and the *Baptiſmal Covenant*, is the *leaſt* that every one of you do profeſs; and that the *deſires* implyed in the Petitions of the Lords Prayer, you all profeſs to be your own deſires; and that you take the ten Commandments for part of the rule of your obedience Let us peruſe them briefly in the ſeveral parts. H 2 1. Do

1. Do you not all say that you *Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth*, and that you *will have no other gods but him*? and are you not accordingly *engaged in Covenant with him*? you will not deny it. And what is the meaning of this much of your profession? It is no less then to *take God* for the *only infinite good*, to be *loved* with the *chiefest love*, and to take him for *your absolute Lord and Governour, the Owner of you and all you have*, to whom you owe universal absolute obedience; and that you are truly willing to love him above all, and fear him, and trust him and obey him accordingly, though your flesh and all the world should be against it. He that meaneth not all this, doth dissemble or lye when he saith, he taketh God to be his God. For *to be God*, is to *be this much to us*.

And

And really *is it* thus with you, as you profeſs? ſpeak but as men that dare not lye before the Lord that knows your hearts? Do you indeed *Love God as God?* with your *ſuperlative love*: Are your *hearts ſet* upon him? Do you make it your principal care to pleaſe him? Is it your delight to do his will? Is it ſweeter to you to think and ſpeak of him, then of the world? Doth it grieve you moſt to offend him? In a word, you are not ſuch ſtrangers to *Nature*, but you know *what love is*. And you are not ſuch ſtrangers to your *own hearts*, but you know what it is, to *love your pleaſure*, your *profit*, your *honour* and your *friend*; can conſcience ſay before the Lord, that you love him better then all theſe? if not more *paſſionately*, yet more deeply, effectually and reſolvedly; with a love that will cauſe you to deny and part with all for him? If you

thus truly love him as God; (and above all) how comes it to pass that you seek the world more carefully, and eagerly then him? and that you are more pleased with worldly thoughts and speeches and employments, then with divine? were not the Hypocrite justly blinded, and a willfull stranger to himself, he could not but know that he loveth not *God as God*, and *above all.* And to love him *in subordination to your flesh* and its *contents*, is not at all *to love him as God*: As it is no degree of conjugal love, to love a wife but as a servant; nor no degree of the love due to your Soveraign, to love him as an equal, or as a slave.

And if really you take God for *your absolute Lord and Governour*, why is it then that you take no pleasure in his *Laws*; but count them too *strict* and had rather be at your own dispose? why is it that

that you obey your fleſhly deſires, before and againſt the God whom you acknowledge? why will you not be perſwaded to that holineſs, juſtice and charity which you know his Law commandeth you? why do you willfully continue in thoſe ſins, which conſcience tells you God forbids? will you live in willfull diſobedience, and love your ſins, and loath your duty, and obſtinately continue thus, and yet profeſs that you take God for your God, and conſequently for your Lord and Governour? and yet will you not confeſs that you are diſſembling Hypocrites?

2. Do you not all profeſs that you *believe in Jeſus Chriſt*? and have you not in *Covenant* taken him for your *Savieur* and *Lord*? And do you *ſo indeed*, or do you not play the *Hypocrites*? If you believe in Chriſt, and take him for your *Savieur*, you then take your

sins for the *disease* and *misery* of your souls, and you are so *grieved* for them and *weary* of them, and *humbled* in the apprehension of your lost estate, that you fly to Christ as your only refuge, from the wrath and curse of the offended Majesty, and value his justifying and healing grace before all the riches of the world; and you are willing to take his bittrest medicines, and use the means appointed by him, for the destruction of your sin, and the perfecting of his graces. And is it thus with you, that have unhumbled hearts, that never felt the need of Christ, as condemned miserable men must do? and that love the sin that he would cure, and are unwilling to be mortified and sanctified by his grace? Unless a carkass be a man, such Hypocrites as these are no true Christians, and have but a seeing self-deceiving faith.

3. Do

3. Do you not all profeſs *to believe in the Holy Ghoſt?* and are you not engaged to him in Covenant as your Sanctifier? And do you not groſly play the Hypocrites here? If not, how comes it to paſs that you ſtick in your natural ſtate, as if you had no need of ſanctification? and live as quietly without any acquaintance with true Regeneration, and the Spirit to dwell and rule within you, as if you needed no ſuch change? Or elſe that you take up with a *Formal*, an *affected*, or a *forced* kind of Religion, in ſtead of Sanctification and ſpiritual devotion? And how comes it to paſs that you diſtaſte the *higheſt degrees* of holineſs? and that you will not be brought to the mortification, ſelf-denyal, and unreſerved obedience, which are the eſſence of ſanctification? As for the more deboiſt prophane ſort of Hypocrites, that make a com-

mon mock of godlineſs, and ſcorn at the very name of Holineſs and Sanctification, and deride at all that pretend to have the *Spirit*; I had rather tremble at the thought of their miſery, then now ſtand to reprove that notorious hypocriſie, which profeſſeth to *believe in the Holy Spirit* which they deride; and Covenanteth with the Sanctifier, while they hate and mock, or at leaſt do obſtinately refuſe ſanctification. When God himſelf tells us, *Rom.* 8. 9. [*That if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, the ſame is none of his.*] And therefore to deride a man for profeſſing that he hath the *Spirit*, is to deride him for profeſſing *to be a Chriſtian.*

4. Do you not all profeſs to [*Believe the Holy Catholick Church*] that is, that Chriſt hath a people diſperſed through the world, that are ſanctified by his Spirit,

Spirit, and made a holy peculiar people, whom he loveth as his Spouſe and as his own Body, of which number you muſt be if you will be ſaved? And yet at the ſame time, the *members* of this *Church*, you contemn; the *holineſs* of it you ſecretly hate; and the faithfull Paſtors in it you deſpiſe and diſobey. Is not this Hypocriſie?

5. You all profeſs to [*Believe the Communion of Saints*:] that is, that the true members of the Catholike Church are all *Saints*, that have one and the ſame Spirit, and walk by the ſame holy Law or Rule, and in holineſs muſt converſe together, and joyn in Church order; for the publick worſhipping of God, according to his own inſtitution: and muſt purely and fervently love each other, with ſuch a charity as ſhall make one as ready to relieve another, when

God

God calls for it, as if our riches did belong in *Common* to the Saints.] This is the meaning of this Article of your Creed. And do I then need to ask you Whether those that profess this, are not Hypocrites, if they *hate* the *Saints*, and their inward spiritual *Communion*, and if they love them but with that lifeless charity that *James* describeth? *Jam.* 2. 14, 15, *&c.* Or if they despise or hate the Discipline, Ordinances and Holy Communion of the Church? And if they live in Communion with drunkards, with harlots, with worldlings, or sensual, vain, or ambitious men, and fly from the *Communion of Saints*? what dost thou, when thou sayst [*I believe the Communion of Saints*] but say [*I am a dissembling Hypocrite*] if it be thus with thee?

6. You all profess to [*Believe the forgiveness of sins*;] that is, that

that through the blood of Chriſt all true repenting and believing ſinners, ſhall be forgiven, and are not ſhut up under remedileſs deſpair. And alſo I think you all profeſs that you do *Repent* your ſelves, that *Forgiveneſs* may be *yours*. And yet you love your ſin: you love not to be told of it: you will not believe it to be ſin, as long as you can ſtrive againſt conviction; and when you muſt needs confeſs it, you will not forſake it; but while you ſeem to reform by parting with ſo much as you can ſpare, your dearer ſins, which pleaſure and honour and profit are much engaged in, you will not forſake: though repentance do conſiſt in turning from ſin to God; and Chriſt hath aſſured you, that *except you repent, you ſhall all periſh*, Luk. 13. 3, 5. Is not this therefore palpable *hypocriſie*, to profeſs repentance for remiſſion

of

of ſin, and ſtill keep the ſin which you ſay you repent of, as if you thought to mock God with names and ſhews?

7. You all profeſs to [*Believe the Reſurrection of the body; and that Chriſt ſhall come again to judge the quick and dead.*] But do you *live* as men that believe indeed, that they are paſſing unto ſuch a judgement? If you ſeriouſly expected to be judged for your lives, for the words you ſpeak, the deeds you do, the time you ſpend, the means of grace which you neglect or uſe, and for all that you receive and do, is it poſſible you could ſo waſte your time, and neglect the means of your ſalvation, and ſin ſo boldly and obſtinately as you do?

8. You all profeſs that you [*Believe the life everlaſting*] that the *Righteous ſhall go into their maſters joy*, and the reſt *into everlaſting*

puniſh-

punishment in hell, *Matth.* 25. and 13. But do you not play the Hypocrites? Can you heartily believe that you stand so near to heaven or hell, to everlasting joy or torments, and make no greater a matter of it, nor make no better preparation for it, nor bestir your selves no more in a case of such unspeakable weight? If you believe sincerely the *glory* of heaven, you set your hearts on it, more then upon earth, and take it for your portion and most desireable felicity. But do I need to tell the worldly fleshly Hypocrite how far he is from this?

9. You profess (as the summ of the ten Commandements) that you *Love God above all, and your neighbours as your selves.*] But doth not your *selfishness* and quarreling with your neighbours, when they do but stand in the way of your honour or commodity, convince

you

you of hypocrisie in this profession?

10. In the use of the Lords prayer, what word do you speak that is not in *hypocrisie*? Do you first and principally desire the *hallowing of Gods name*, the *coming of his Kingdom*, and *the doing of his will*?] when you are far more tender of your *own names* then of Gods, and more regardful of your own *honour*? And when you care more for your own prosperity then for the prosperity of the Church and Gospel; and do your selves become the hinderers of his Kingdom and Government in the Church and in the souls of men? And when you cannot abide to do his *Will*, when it crosseth the interest of your flesh, but dislike it as too strict, and had rather the Word and Will of God were agreeable to yours, then you will conform your own to his?

Do

Do you only desire [*Your daily bread*, and that in *subordination to the honour, and Kingdom, and will of God.*] Or rather do you not play the Hypocrites in saying so, when it is not [*daily bread*] that will content you; but plenty and prosperity is sweeter to you then *holiness?*

When you pray for [*The forgiveness of your sins, as you forgive others*] you intimate that you are weary of your sins, and hate them, and would forsake them; and that you forgive all that have wronged you, out of the sense of your own transgressions, and of the love of Christ: but is all this so, or is it meer dissembling, when you forsake not your sin, nor are willing to forsake it, and when your consciences know that there be some that you forgive not?

You pray against [*being led into temptation*] and yet you *love* it and

and caſt your ſelves into it. Into *tempting company*, and tempting *talk*, and tempting *employments*: And for recreation, meat, drink, apparel, houſes, attendants, eſtate, reputation, and almoſt all things elſe, you *love* and *chooſe* that which is *moſt tempting*.

You pray to be *delivered from evil*:] when the evil of your pride, fleſh pleaſing, and worldlineſs, you ſo love, that indeed you *would not* be delivered from them. What can you ſay to excuſe all this from palpable *Hypocriſie*?

To conclude, you pretend to all thats neceſſary to ſalvation; but have you that in reality which you pretend to?

1. You think your ſelves *wiſe enough* to be ſaved. But is it not *folly* that goes under the name of *wiſedom*? When you ſhould be converted and lead a holy life, you are *Wiſe enough* to give reaſons for the

the *contrary*, and *wise enough* to confute the Preacher, and prove him a fool, instead of obeying the call of God. You are *wise enough* to prove the Physician to be ignorant, and to cast away the medicine that should heale you. And what if no body could deal with you in subtilty of argument, but you could say that against the necessary means of your own salvation, that none can answer? when you *die by your wisdom*; and have disputed your selves out of the reach of mercy, will you not bewail it then as *folly*? Is he *wiser* that being hungry eats his meat, or he that gives such reasons for his refusing it, and pleadeth so learnedly against eating and drinking, that none can answer him? Is the condemned man wiser that makes friends for a pardon? or he that with unanswerable subtilty reasoneth against it, till the ladder be turned?

turned? such is your vain and *seeming wisdom*. You are *not wise enough* to be *cured*, but to *give reasons* why you should *continue sick*. In the issue it will prove, that you were not *wise enough to be saved*, but notably wise to resist salvation, and plead your selves into hell.

2. You pretend that you have a *saving faith*, when your hearts refuse that salvation from sin, and that rule of Christ which is the object of faith: and when you will not believe the doctrines, precepts or threatnings that cross your own conceits; and when your belief of heaven will not carry your hearts from earth, nor work you to a holy heavenly life.

3. You pretend to *Repentance* (as I said before) while you hold fast the sin, and give not up your selves to God: when as if your

neighbour,

neighbour, or *Master*, or *Husband* should but *beat* one of you, and tell you when he hath done that he *repenteth*, and do this as oft as *you* commit your willful sins, and say *you repent*, I am confident you would not take it for *true repentance*. You *repent*, but will not *confess* when it is to your *disgrace*, as long as you *can hide* your sin. You *repent*, but will not make *restitution* or reparation of injuries to your power. You *repent*, but your heart riseth against him that reproveth you. You *repent*, but you had rather keep your sins then leave them. Whats this but to *deceive your own hearts*, and to mock your selves with a *seeming vain* and *mock-repentance*?

4. You pretend to *love God above all*, (as was before said) when you love not his Image, waies or communion: but love that which he hateth, and still prefer

prefer the world before him.

5. You pretend that you have *true desires to be godly* and what God would have you be: But they are such *desires* as the sluggard hath to rise, and as the slothful hath to work: that is, if it could be done with ease, and without labour: you lie still, and use not the means with diligence, for all your desires. When you can sit and have your work done with wishes, and your families maintained, and your necessities all supplied with wishes, you may think to come to heaven with wishes: The good desires that the poor may be warmed and cloathed, that *James* speaks of, *Jam.*2.15. did neither relieve the poor, nor save the wisher. [*The desire of the slothful killeth him, because his hands refuse to labour*, Prov. 21. 25.] Up and be doing according to thy desires, or else confess that thy wishes

wiſhes are hypocritical, and that thou deceiveſt thy own heart by *Vain deſires*.

6. You alſo pretend to be *ſincere worſhippers of God*. You pray, and you read the Scripture and good books, and you hear the Word, and receive the Lords Supper. But I have before ſhewed you your hypocriſie in theſe: you pray againſt the ſin that you love and would not leave: you pray for holineſs, when you hate it or deſire it not, in any degree to croſs your fleſh: you ſerve God with meer words (whether of your own conceiving, or of others preſcribing,) with ſome forced acknowledgement of that God that hath not your hearts or lives. Let Chriſt paſs the ſentence on you, and not I, *Matth.* 15. 7, 8, 9. [*Ye hypocrites, well did* Eſaias *Propheſie of you, ſaying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth*

honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me: But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandements of men] You like that *teaching* that sooths you in your own opinions, and galleth not your consciences in the guilty place: *A Ministry* you would have, that should stand like an adorned Idol that hurts no body, and toucheth not your sores: or that is but instead of a pair of Organs, or a tinckling Cymbal, to tickle your fancy, and make Church-worship to be as a kind of religious stage-play to you. But a true Minister of Christ, to open to you the doctrine of the Kingdom, and roundly to awake you from security in sin, and to call you up to the most serious holy heavenly life, and follow you and let you take no rest, till you yeild and practise it; and to call you to open confession of your open scandalous

dalous ſins, that you may make ſuch reparation to the wronged honour of God and ſouls of men, as you are capable of, and accordingly to abſolve you, or to bind you over to anſwer it at the bar of God, and charge the Church to avoid communion with you, if you are impenitent and incorrigible; *ſuch a Miniſtry as this* (which is the Miniſtry of Chriſts appointment) you abhor; at leaſt, when they come to *touch your ſores.* Then you are too proud to be taught and ruled by ſuch as theſe, though you hypocritically profeſs to be ruled by Chriſt, who ruleth his Church by his *Spirit*, *Word* and *Miniſters* conjunct. Then you ſay, who gave you authority to do thus and thus by me? As if you knew not that Chriſt in Scripture hath deſcribed, confirmed and limited the Miniſterial office. Like condemned Traytors, that

ſhould ſay to him that bringeth them a pardon [*Who gave you authority to make ſo bold with me?*] or like a man that hath the plague or leproſie, that asketh the Phyſician [*Who gave you authority to tell me that I am ſick, and put me on ſuch medicines as theſe?*] or as the Iſraelite to *Moſes*, Exod. 2.14. [*Who made thee a Prince and a Judge over us?*] not underſtanding that *God by his hand would deliver them*, ſaith *Stephen*, Act. 7.25. Or as the Jews to Chriſt, when he was teaching men the way to heaven, *Matth.* 21.23. [*By what authority doſt thou theſe things, and who gave thee this authority?*] ſo becauſe you hate the way of your recovery, you will not be *ſaved without authority*, nor be *ſatisfied of their authority* that would *ſave* you, but are like a beggar that ſhould proudly refuſe a piece of gold, and ask, *By what authority*

do you give it me? A Ministry that agreeth with Gods description you cannot abide, *Act.* 20. 28. 36. *Heb.* 13. 7, 17. 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. 1 *Thes.* 5. 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17, 20. and 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. So that indeed it is but a mock-minister, a mock-sacrament, a mock-prayer, and so a *seeming vain* Religion which you desire.

7. Lastly, you pretend also to *sincere obedience:* If we ask you, whether you are willing to obey God? you will say, God forbid that any should deny it. But when it comes to the particulars, and you find that he commandeth you that which flesh and blood is against, and would cost you the loss of worldly prosperity, then you will be excused: and yet that you may cheat your souls, you will not professedly disobey; but you will perswade your selves that it is no duty, and that God would not

have you do that which you *will not* do. Like a Countrymans ſervant, that promiſeth to do all that his Maſter bids him: but when he cometh to particulars, threſhing is too hard a work, and mowing and reaping are beyond his ſtrength, and plowing is too toylſome; and in the concluſion, it is only an idle life with ſome eaſie charres, that he will be brought to. This is the Hypocrites obedience. He will obey God in all things, as far as he is able, in the general: But when it comes to particulars, *To deny himſelf*, and forſake his worldly proſperity for Chriſt, and to contemn the world, and live by faith, and converſe in heaven, and walk with God, and worſhip him in Spirit and truth, to love an enemy, to forgive all wrongs, to humble our ſelves to the meaneſt perſons, and to the loweſt works; to confeſs our faults with ſhame and ſorrow,

row, and ask forgiveneſs of thoſe they have injured, theſe and other ſuch works as theſe, they will not believe to be parts of obedience, or at leaſt, will not be brought to do them.

Poor ſouls, I have ſtood here a great while to hold you the glaſs, in which, if you were willing, you might ſee your ſelves. But if you will yet wink and hate the light, if you periſh in your ſelf-deceiving, who can help it?

Briefly and plainly, be it known to thee again, whoever thou art that heareſt this, that if thou have not theſe *five* characters following, thy Religion is all but *vain* and ſelf-deceiving.

1. If *Gods authority*, as he ſpeaketh by his Spirit, Word and Miniſters, be not *higheſt* with thy ſoul, and cannot do more with thee, then Kings and Parliaments, and then the world and fleſh, *Mat.* 23. 8,9,10.

2. If the [illegible]ing glory, be not *practically* more *esteemed* by thee, and chosen, and sought, then any thing, or all things in the world, *Mat.* 6. 21. *Col.* 3. 4. *Joh.* 6. 27. 2 *Tim.* 4. 8, 9. *Matth.* 22. 5. *Luke* 18. 22, 23. *Phil.* 3. 20.

3. If thou *see* not such a *loveliness in holiness*, as being the image of God, as that thou unfeignedly desirest the *highest degree* of it, *Matth.* 5. 20. *Psal.* 119. 1, 2, 3, &c. *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14.

4. If *any sin be so sweet and dear to you*, or seem so *necessary*, that you *consent* not, and *desire* not to let it go, *Mat.* 19. 22. *Phil.* 3. 8. *Psal.* 66. 18.

5. If *any known duty* seem so *costly*, *dangerous*, *troublesome* and *unpleasant*, that *ordinarily* you *will not* do it, *Mat.* 16. 24, 25, 26. *Psal.* 119. 6.

In a word, *God* must be loved and obeyed *as God*, *Christ* must be enter-

entertained *as Christ*: *Heaven* must be valued and sought *as Heaven*; and *Holiness* loved and practised as *Holiness*: Though not to the *height* of their proper *worth* (which none on earth is able to reach) yet so, as that nothing be preferred before them.

BUt yet there is one more discovery which if I pass by, you will think I bawk a chief part of my text.

An unbridled tongue in a Professor of Religion is enough to prove his Religion vain.

By an *unbridled tongue* is not meant all the sins of our speech. [*If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. But in many things we offend all*] Jam. 3. 2. Every unwarrantable jeast, or angry word, or hasty rash expressi-

on, is not enough to prove a mans *Religion* to be in *vain*. Though Christ say that we shall *answer for every idle word*, he doth not say, *we shall be condemned for every idle word*: But when the tongue is unbridled, and is not kept under a holy Law, but suffered to be the ordinary instrument of wilfull known sin, or of gross sin which men might know and will not, this proves the person void of holiness, and consequently his Religion vain.

Its true; every Hypocrite hath not an unbridled tongue: some of them have the bridle of moral precepts, and some of Religious education, and some of the presence and awe of persons whom they esteem: common knowledge, with natural mansuetude and moderation doth bridle the tongues of many an Hypocrite: But as every wicked man is not a drunkard, or fornicator,

fornicator, and yet every drunkard or fornicator (that liveth in it) is a wicked man; so every Hypocrite hath not an unbridled tongue (his vice may lie some other way); but every man that hath an unbridled tongue is an Hypocrite, if withall he profess himself a Christian.

The sins of the tongue are of three sorts. 1. Such as are against *piety*. 2. Such as are against *Justice*. 3. Such as are against *Charity*.

1. Against *Piety*, that is, directly against God, are, Blasphemy, Perjury, rash swearing, swearing by creatures, light and unreverent using of Gods Name, and attributes, and Word and works: pleading for false doctrine, or false worship: disputing against truth and duty: scorning at godliness: or reasoning against it. These and such *impieties* of the tongue,

the evidences of prophaneneſs in the ſpeakers heart; though ſome of them much more then others: and if the tongue be not then bridled, all is in vain.

2. Sinfull ſpeeches againſt Juſtice and charity are theſe: reproaching Parents, or Governours, or neighbours: railing and reviling: curſing: provoking others to do miſchief, or commit any ſin: diſputing againſt, and diſſwading men from truth and duty; and hindering them by your ſpeeches from a holy life, and the means of their ſalvation: calling good, evil, and evil, good: lying; ſlandering; falſe witneſs-bearing; back-biting: extenuating mens vertues, and aggravating their faults beyond the certain apparent truth: receiving, and reciting, and carrying on evil reports, which you know not to be true: endeavouring to cool mens love to others, by making

ing them ſeem bad, when we cannot prove it: mentioning mens faults and failings without a call and juſt occaſion, unchaſt, immodeſt, ribald ſpeeches: cheating and deceitful words to wrong others in their eſtates: with other ſuch like.

But undoubtedly that ſin of the tongue which the Apoſtle here had particular reſpect to, was the reproaching of fellow-Chriſtians, eſpecially upon the occaſion of ſome differences of judgement and practice in the ſmaller matters of Religion: The Judaizing Chriſtians give liberty to their tongues, to reproach thoſe that refuſed the uſe of thoſe ceremonies, which they uſed themſelves, and placed much of their Religion in: The quarrel was the ſame that was decided by the Apoſtles, *Act.* 15. and by *Paul*, Rom. 14. and 15. and throughout the Epiſtle to the

Galathians,

Galathians. And this is the *Religion* that *James* calls vain here, which was much placed in ceremonies, with a pretenſe of higheſt knowledge, and a cenſorious vilifying of all that would not do as they.

There are eſpecially three ſorts that uſe to reproach each other about the matters of Religion. 1. Thoſe that are hardened to that height of impiety, as to make a mock at ſerioufneſs and diligence in the practiſe of Chriſtianity it ſelf, hating and reproaching them that dare not ſell their ſouls at as baſe a price as they.

2. Thoſe that have ſo far extinguiſhed charity by faction and ſelf-conceit, as to confine their love and honour to their party, and to ſpeak evil of thoſe that are not of their own opinions.

3. Thoſe that give liberty to their tongues unreaſonably, unmeaſurably.

measurably or unwarrantably to speak hardly of those that they *suffer by* upon *Religious accounts*; though perhaps they are their *superiours* whom they are bound to honour.

1. The *first sort* are arrived at such a measure of maliciousness and misery, that they are, as mad men, the objects of compassion to all men save themselves. Their sin and misery is so notorious, that I need not say any thing to discover it to *others*, that have any thing of reason and true Religion: And for *themselves*, being so far forsaken of God, as to hate and reproach the means of their salvation, no wonder if withal they are given over to that *blindness* as not to understand the words that should convince them, and neither to see their shame, nor the light that would discover it: and to such *impenitency*, as not to feel or fear

fear the wrath and threatnings of the Almighty; but boldly to rage on, till Hell hath brought them to their wits. *Prov.* 14. 16. *A wise man feareth and departeth from evil, but the fool rageth and is confident.* Yet this much briefly I shall say to these, if any of them be this day my auditors, that I may not leave them as utterly past hope.

1. Thou art one of the most self-condemned stigmatized slaves of Satan in the world. Thou bearest openly so undoubted a brand of wickedness, that there is no room for any rational Hope in thy self, or any of thy friends, that ever thou shouldst be saved, if thou die in such a state: *Some Hope* is left that yet thou mayst be *converted*; but *none*, that thou shouldst be *saved Without conversion.* It is possible with God that can do all things, that yet thy wilful

wilful blindneſs may be cured, and thy tongue may unſay all that thou haſt ſaid; and thou mayſt cry out of thy folly, and cry ſhame againſt thy ſelf, for that which now thou glorieſt in. It is poſſible for God of ſuch a ſtone, to make a child of *Abraham*! and to melt that hardened heart of thine, and lay it bleeding at the feet of Chriſt, and make thee wiſh with tears or groans, that ſuch thoughts had never entred into thy heart, nor ſuch words of malice proceeded from thy mouth. And happy art thou, if God will have ſo much mercy on thee, that haſt derided mercy, as to vouchſafe thee ſuch a change. And pray for it, and pray hard, and pray again, if thou love thy ſoul: For this is thy Hope: and thou haſt no other. For that ever ſuch a wretch as thou ſhouldſt be ſaved, in the ſtate that now thou art in, is as impoſſible as for

God

God to lie; and as impoſſible as for the Devils to be ſaved. I wonder (but that ſuch a forſaken ſoul, is a ſenſleſs block, and as a liſeleſs carkaiſe) that thou doſt not quake with the fears of Hell, which way ever thou goeſt; and that thou art not ſtill thinking whither thou art going, and how the Devils are ready to take thy ſoul, as ſoon as Death hath opened the door and let it out, into Eternity! As careleſly or ſcornfully as thou ſitteſt here, I wonder that thou doſt not tremble to conſider, where it is that thou muſt ſhortly be, and where thou muſt abide for ever? It is one of the moſt notable diſcoveries of the powerfull craft of Satan, that he is able to keep ſuch a Garriſon as thy heart in ſo much peace, and to quiet a poor wretch, that is uncertain to be one hour out of Hell! That thy ſleep is not broken with

terrible

terrible dreams, and that thou doſt not eat thy meat in terrours; and that ever a ſmile ſhould be ſeen in thy face! That thy buſineſs, or company, or ſports, or pleaſures, ſhould once put out of thy mind thy endleſs miſery. While I am ſpeaking, and thou art hearing, Hell-fire is burning, and the Devils are waiting, and thy blinded ſoul is poſting on, and for ought thou knoweſt, may be there this night. Poor ſinner, for my part, I know thee not! and therefore cannot juſtly be ſuſpected to bear thee any ill will, or to ſpeak theſe words with a deſire of thy hurt. I know this is language that the guilty do not love to hear. But I muſt tell thee, that reproacheſt or derideſt a ſerious holy life, that except the Blaſphemers of the Holy Ghoſt, there is few in the world in more certain miſery then thou. Other ſinners, though miſerable,

may

may have some more *cloak* to *hide* their misery. Though the *drunkard* shall not enter into Heaven, he may flatter himself with the remembrance that *Noah* was once overtaken with that sin. Though the *Fornicator* or *Adulterer* shall not enter into the Kingdom of God (*Eph.* 5. 5.) he may cheat himself awhile, with the remembrance of *Davids* guilt. Though the false-hearted, temporizing, self-saving Hypocrite, shall not be saved, he may deceive himself by the instance of *Peters* denying his Master, and his dissimulation, *Gal.* 2. But what cloak hast *thou* to hide thy misery! Did ever any true Disciple of Christ, either hate or reproach his servants and his wayes! What godly man hath made a mock at godliness, (unless it were when he was ungodly.) If any should think, that an act of drunkenness, or fornication,

might

might consist with grace; no man that understands himself can think, that a scorner at an Holy life, hath himself the Holiness which he scorneth! I would not for a world be in the case of that wretch, that speaks well of Holiness in others, while he lives in fornication, luxury or worldliness himself, though he think that he cuts scores by daily crying to God for mercy. But I would much less for a thousand worlds be in the case of him that neither is godly, nor can *speak well of it*: that is not only void of the Spirit of Christ, but *speaks against it*: that is not only void of the Holy Image of God, but *hateth it*, and *reproacheth it* in others. O rather let me have no tongue to speak, no soul to think, then ever I should speak or think thus maliciously of the Image, and wayes, and servants of the Lord! I had rather be a dog or a toad, then

then one of thoſe men that uſe to mock at ſerious diligent ſerving of the Lord, or that maliciouſly reproach his ſervants, and bend their wits and tongues againſt them; ſo legibly is the mark of the Devil upon them, that I muſt needs tell you that are true Believers, you are much to be blamed that you look not on them with more compaſſion, and weep not for them, as for men that are within a ſtep of Hell, when you hear them rail at the Laws or ſervants of the Lord. I mean thoſe of whom the Apoſtle ſaith, [*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt* (that is, to the ſelf-denying mortified ſtate of Chriſtians, and following him even through ſufferings) *whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, and whoſe glory is in their ſhame,*

ſhame, who mind earthly things, Phil. 3. 18, 19. that not only do wickedly, but *teach men ſo to do*, Matth. 5. 19. and *have pleaſure in them that do it*, Rom. 1. 32. and *think it ſtrange that we run not with them to the ſame exceſs of ryot, ſpeaking evil of us; who ſhall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead*, 1 Pet. 4. 4, 5

2. Thou beareſt moſt eminently the image of the Devil, and moſt expreſly ſpeakeſt his mind, and art moſt openly employed in his works. What is the Devil, but an apoſtate ſpirit, filled with enmity againſt God and his ſervants, and hating Holineſs, the malicious Accuſer of the Brethren, ſlandering and reproaching them, and ſeeking their deſtruction! And ſhall a malicious, lying ſinner live, that imitateth Satan in his enmity to God! O that thou knewelt whom

whom thou ſerveſt! and that thou knoweſt whom thou ſpeakeſt againſt! *Wo be to him that ſtriveth with his Maker*, Iſa. 45. 9. *Its hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks*, Acts 9. 5. *Who ever hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* Job 9. 4. If Satan were to ſpeak with open face, what would he ſay, but as the tongues of the malicious enemies of holineſs do; even to ſpeak evil of the wayes and ſervants of the Lord? Might he appear and ſpeak himſelf in the Aſſemblies and Councils of the great ones of the earth, he would ſpeak againſt the ſame men, and to the ſame purpoſe, as thoſe that I have deſcribed. *Your tongues* are *his inſtruments*. You ſpeak what he ſecretly ſuggeſteth, as verily as if he had written you your *inſtructions*, and you had read it in his words: *He hateth* holineſs, and there-

therefore he tempteth *you* to *hate* it. He would bring it into hatred in the world, and therefore he ſpeaks diſgraceſully of it by your tongues. His will is your will. And your words are his words: and the pleaſant'ſt muſick that you could make him. O how it pleaſeth him to make a reaſonable creature reproach the Word and waies of his Creatour! How eager was he to have got *Job* to have ſpoken evil of God!

3. Be it known to thee, thou reviler, that if ever thou be ſaved thy ſelf, it muſt be in that way that thou revileſt. Thy hope lyeth in it. As ſure as thou liveſt, there is no other way to life eternal. *Without holineſs none ſhall ſee God*, Heb. 12.14. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God*, Matth. 5.8. When thou haſt all done, thou muſt come back, and go that way thy ſelf or burn for ever. Either thou muſt

muſt be ſuch as thoſe that thou doſt ſpeak againſt, or thou art everlaſtingly undone. And if thou think to be ſuch a one thy ſelf, and to come to heaven by the very way that now thou doſt revile, canſt thou yet revile it ! And if thou periſh in hell for want of holineſs, thou ſhalt then have enough of thy rebellion. Then thou ſhalt cry out againſt thy own malicious reproaches a thouſand times more, then ever thou didſt againſt the ſervants of the Lord. Though the very diſtinction between the *Godly* and *Ungodly* be now thy ſcorn, yet I ſhall be bold to tell thee in the words of *Henoch*, yea of God, *Jud.* 14. 15. [*Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his Saints, to execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard*

ſpeeches

ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.] Now you have *your day*, and *judgement muſt begin at the houſe of God! and if it firſt begin at us, what ſhall the end be of them that obey not the Goſpel of God! and if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?* 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly, nor ſtandeth in the way of ſinners, nor ſitteth in the ſeat of the ſcornful! But his delight is in the Law of the Lord; and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.*—— *The ungodly are not ſo; but like the chaffe which the wind driveth away: therefore the ungodly ſhall not ſtand in the judgement, nor ſinners in the congregation of the righteous: For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly ſhall periſh*, Pſal. 1. This is *Scripture diſtinction*; which God will make good.

I make no queſtion, but the worſt of you will put by all this in your ſelf-deceit, and ſay, *It is not holineſs that we ſpeak againſt, but its Hypocriſie, or Schiſme*, or ſome ſuch accuſation that malice ſhall ſuggeſt, will be your mask. But will you anſwer me theſe few Queſtions.

Queſt. 1. Why then do you not imitate them ſo far as they do well! why are you not as much in works of holineſs, as they! in reading, and meditating on the Word of God, in holy conference, and ſecret prayer, and inſtructing your families *&c*? and then leave them and ſpare not where they do amiſs.

Queſt. 2. Why do you not hate as much the ſins of the notoriouſly ungodly, who ſhew them without ſhame? Nay why do you make ſuch men your companions?

Queſt. 3. Why go you to the heart

heart, that is unſeen, and arrogate the prerogative of God, to cenſure men of Hypocriſie and ſuch ſecret ſins that are out of your diſcerning? If you know your heart by outward actions, inſiſt upon your prooſes.

Queſt. 4. Why ſpeak you not of their good as well as of the ſuppoſed evil? why are you not more in ſpeaking well of what is well, then in ſpeaking ill of what is ill?

Queſt. 5. Why is it that you ſpeak of men that you know not? and of others that are innocent, for the ſakes of thoſe that you imagine to be guilty? and why do you ſo greedily ſnatch at any matter of reproach, and take it by hearſay from the moſt ignorant, raſh, or malicious mouths?

Queſt. 6. If it be Hypocriſie or other vice that you ſo hate; why do you not hate them in your ſelves? why live you ſo viciouſly,

while you profeſs obedience to the Lord? and why do you take on you to believe a heaven and hell hereafter, and to give up your ſelves in Covenant to God, and live ſo contrary to that profeſt belief and Covenant?

Queſt. 7. Do you not feel that it is partly malice, and partly the recriminations of a guilty galled conſcience, that fain would ſteal a little peace by thinking others to be as bad as you?

I ſhall diſmiſs this unhappy ſort of men with theſe two requeſts. 1. You are the men that of all others have the moſt notable advantage for *your* conviction, of the miſery of your preſent ſtate: and therefore I beſeech you take that advantage. One would think it ſhould be the eaſieſt matter in the world, for ſuch as you to know that you are ungodly, that hate godlineſs and oppoſe it? you have

no

no plausible pretence for self-flattery or self-deceit. And therefore confess your misery, and look out to Christ, for help and pardon, while there is hope and time.

2. For the time to come, will you but *try* a serious holy life before you speak against it any more? For shame speak not evil of the *things you know not*, as those bruits described, *Jud.* 10. And holiness was never *well known* but by *experience*. O that you would be intreated but to yeild to this most equal motion. Away with your worldly fleshly lives; and live in faith and holiness, a just, a spiritual and heavenly life, but one year, or one quarter, or one moneth, and then if by *experience* you find just cause for it, reproach a holy life, and spare not.

II. TO the second sort, (that speak evil of men upon differences of opinion, especially while they profess the same Religion, in all the essential necessary parts,) I shall propose these aggravations of their sin, for their humiliation.

1. Consider, can you think it agreeable to the Law of Christ, to reproach men behind their backs, and unheard, for that which you never soberly and Christianly told them of to their faces? Did you lovingly first admonish them, and impartially hear what they can say for themselves? what is your end in speaking against your brother? Is it to do him *hurt*, or *good*? If *hurt*, be sure you do him *Justice*; and backbiting is not the way of *Justice*. If *good*, you cross your own intention. For what *good* can

can it do him, that another hears him evil ſpoken of ?

2. If you are *Chriſts Diſciples*, it muſt be *known to all men by your ſpecial love to one another*, Joh. 13. 35. And is reproach and evil-ſpeaking the fruit or evidence of ſuch love ? can you talk ſo of the friends that are moſt dear to you, or that you love indeed ? how do our hearts riſe againſt that man, that ſpeaks reproachfully of our deareſt friends? Love would ſcarce ſuffer you to endure ſuch abuſe of Chriſtians in another, without a ſerious reprehenſion : much leſs to be the abuſer of them your ſelves.

3. Your evil ſpeaking of your brethren deſtroyeth *love in others*, as it proves the want of it in your ſelves. And to *deſtroy their love*, is to *deſtroy their ſouls*. You do your worſt to quench the love, both of him that you ſpeak evil of, and of

them to whom you ſpeak it. *Good* is the object of love: and therefore to ſpeak of men, and manifeſt them to be *lovely*, is the only way to make them *loved*. *Evil* is the object of hatred: and therefore to ſpeak evil of them, is to make them ſeem hateful, and draw men to the guilt of hating them. To *praiſe* a man will do more to make him *loved*, then if you only *intreat* another to love him. And to *diſpraiſe* a man will do more to make him hated, then if you directly *perſwade* another to hate him. And what ſervice you do the Devil, and what diſſervice unto Chriſt, by deſtroying love, and ſowing hatred among his ſervants, were you impartial, you might eaſily diſcern.

4. Is it not ſhame and pitty, that the followers of Chriſt ſhould imitate the Devil, and ungodly men, as by detraction and reviling words

words they do? you aggravate your brethrens faults, and find faults where there are none; and so do Satan and ungodly men. You have a secret desire to make them seem contemptible and vile; and so have Satan and ungodly men. And hereby you seem to justifie the wicked, and encourage them in their reproaching. They think *they* may boldly speak such language of you all, as they hear you speak of one another. O what pitty is it to hear the professed children of the Lord, to use the hell-bred language of his enemies, as if they had gone to school to Satan!

5. Are there not tongues enough sharpened against us in the world, but we must wound each other with our own? Is it not enough, if we are the seed of Christ, that every where the serpents seed do hate us; and that all

manner of evil is falſly ſpoken of us, and that we are made as the ſcorn and the off-ſcouring of all things, but we muſt alſo hate and reproach each other? Have you not load enough from the world? Have you not enemies enough to do the *work* of *enemies*, but friends muſt do it? And hath not Satan inſtruments and tongues enough of his own, but he muſt uſe thoſe that are Chriſts againſt himſelf?

6. If thou hate thy brother, yet ſure thou doſt not hate *thy ſelf*. Why then doſt thou *hurt and ſhame thy ſelf*? His hurt is but to be *defamed*, which is little, if any thing at all (for it is much in himſelf whether it ſhall hurt him.) But *thy* hurt that doſt it, is to provoke God againſt thee, and incur his wrath, and wound thy ſoul by the guilt of *ſin*. And if another *hurt* thee, in the heel, wilt thou therefore ſtab thy ſelf to the heart? If another

another be bad, wilt *thou* become ſo by unjuſt defaming him? And how doſt thou croſs thine own intentions? The ſtone that thou caſteſt at him, flyes back in thy face. Thou proclaimeſt thy own tranſgreſſions and ſhame, when thou art uncharitably proclaiming his. Is not a backbiter, a reviler, if not a malicious calumniator, a worſe name (which thou tak'ſt to thy ſelf) then that which thou canſt faſten on him whom thou doſt reproach?

7. Thy uncharitable ſpeeches are a dangerous ſign of an unhumbled and unpardoned ſoul. If thou canſt not forgive, thou art not forgiven. Did you know your ſelves, it would teach you to deal more compaſſionately with others. You would have the act of Oblivion as extenſive as you could, if you knew what danger you are in your ſelves. Do you not know as much by your ſelves as you have

to

to reproach your brother with? Do you not then invite both God and man to take you at the worſt, and uſe you as you uſe your brother? methinks you ſhould rather be deſirous of a more tender and indulgent way, as knowing what *need yourſelves* have of it.

If you ſay, [*O but he hath done thus and thus againſt me*] Let conſcience ſay what *you* have done your ſelves againſt God & others. If you ſay, *He is a Schiſmatick, an Hypocrite, or this or that*; remember, that malice is blind, & never wants matter of accuſation or reproach, & innocency is no defence againſt it: elſe Chriſt and his Prophets and Apoſtles had been better uſed by the world. And ask conſcience whether more then you can truly ſay of him, may not be ſaid againſt your ſelves. If all ſuch muſt be detamed, how infamous will you be?

8. If you will *ſpeak* ill, you muſt

hear

hear ill. You teach men how to uſe you. [*Si mihi pergit quæ vult dicere, quæ non vult audict.*

Benedictis ſi certaſſet, audiſſet bene] ſaith the *Comædian*. And God uſually in juſtice ſuffereth it ſo to be. And as thoſe that by violence trample down others, when they feel themſelves on the higher ground, do oft live to be trampled on themſelves; ſo thoſe that take their advantages to inſult, and defame others, do uſually live to be defamed. For *with what meaſure you mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again*, Matth. 7. 1, 2. *Judge not therefore, that ye be not judged.*

TO which of theſe two former ranks you ſhould refer the common names of ſcorn that religious perſons have been moſt loaded with among us, you muſt judge by the particular occaſion and perſon. It is not my intenti-

on

on or desire to plead for any faction, disobedience, irregularity, or hypocrisie; much less to palliate heresies or odious crimes that are cloaked with the name or profession of Religion. It is the Hypocrite that I am all this while detecting. But I must say that it hath been the highest brand or character of *Hypocrisie and impudent profaneness conjunct*, and one of the most crying transgressions of this Land, that men baptized into the Name of Christ, have made a scorn at the diligent serving of him, and lived in the hatred of that Religion in the life and practice, which themselves profess. And that if upon some small circumstantial differences, any of their superiours have but encouraged them, to use any nickname of reproach against their most conscientious brethren, they have been glad of the occasion, and used those

thoſe reproaches againſt the ſerious practice of Religion, which others pretend to uſe only againſt mens different opinions, which they account their exorbitancies or miſtakes. How the names of [Zealots, Preciſians, Puritans,] and ſuch like, have been uſed in this Land; and what ſort of people have been made thereby (and by the diſcountenance of thoſe that ſhould have cheriſhed a diligent holy life) to be the common ſcorn; and how great a hindrance this hath proved to the ſalvation of many thouſand ſouls, is a thing that's much more ſad to mention, then difficult to prove. And when one nickname is grown out of uſe, the ſerpentine enmity watcheth for the opportunity that's afforded by differences and diſcountenance of the times, to take up another that may have a ſharper ſting. The dead form of Religion, and

and as much as you will of *words* and *ſhews*, they can reverence or endure: But *Life*, and *Seriouſneſs*, and *Practice* is the thing they hate. Juſt like a Bear or other ravenous creature, that will let their prey alone while it *ſeems dead* and *ſtirs* not: but if it *ſtir*, they leap upon it, and tear it into pieces. And therefore it is that the diligent zealous exerciſe of Religion, among the Papiſts, by Images, and Tautologies, and lifeleſs Ceremonies and forms is not half ſo much hated or reproached by the vulgar, as the ſerious exerciſe of unqueſtionable duties, that all are in words agreed in, is here with us. To pray in our families; to inſtruct our children and ſervants in the neceſſary points of faith and duty; to exhort a drunkard, a ſwearer, a covetous perſon, or other ungodly ones to repent and to give up themſelves to a holy life,

life; to take up any ſerious ſpeech of death and judgement, and the life to come, and the neceſſary preparations thereto; theſe and ſuch like are the odious marks of a *Zealot*, a *Preciſian*, or *Puritan* with the ungodly rabble: ſo that ſerving the great and glorious God is with them become a matter of ſcorn; while ſerving the Devil is taken for their glory, if they can but do it in the plauſible leſs diſgraceful mode.

But becauſe ſome of the chief accuſers of the Brethren, would needs perſwade men, that the ordinary uſage of the forementioned *Nicknames* hath been leſs impious and more juſtifiable, againſt a ſort of people only whom they feign to be unfit for humane ſociety, I ſhall only appeal now to the *Godly Biſhops* and *conformable Miniſters* that mention it.

Biſhop *G. Downame* (who though he

he hath written ſo much for Biſhops, hath written as much to prove the Pope to be the Antichriſt) in his Sermon called, *Abrahams Tryal*, p. 72. ſaith [*And even in theſe times, the godly live among ſuch a generation of men, as that if a man do but labour to keep a good conſcience in any meaſure, though he meddle not with matters of ſtate, or Diſcipline, or Ceremonies; (As for example, if a Miniſter diligently Preach, or in his Preaching ſeek to profit, rather then to pleaſe, &c. — Or if a private Chriſtian makes conſcience of ſwearing, ſanctifying the Sabbath, frequenting Sermons, or abſtaining from the common corruptions of the time) he ſhall ſtrait way be condemned for a* Puritan, *and conſequently be leſs favoured, then either carnal Goſpeller or a cloſe Papiſt*, &c.] Such were the times then.

Dr. *Robert Abbot*, publike Profeſſor

feſſor of Divinity in *Oxford*, and after Biſhop of *Salisbury*, in a Sermon on *Eaſter*-day, 1615. ſaith; [*That men under pretence of truth, and Preaching againſt the* Puritans, *ſtrike at the heart and root of faith and Religion now eſtabliſhed among us: that this Preaching againſt the Puritans was but the practice of* Parſons *and* Campians *Counſel, when they came into* England *to ſeduce young Students: And when many of them were afraid to loſe their places if they ſhould profeſſedly be thus, the Counſel they then gave them was, that they ſhould ſpeak freely againſt the Puritans, and that ſhould ſuffice,*] &c. ſo he.

Of Arch-Biſhop *Lands* tract of *Doctrinal Puritaniſm*, drawn up for and preſented to the Duke of *Buckingham*, ſee *Prin* in his Tryal, *p.* 156. Divers Biſhops have affirmed that the Jeſuites were the maſters of this nickname here in

England,

England, and the promoters of it.

But of the common ſenſe of this word, and the uſe of it, I ſhall now call in no more witneſſes but Mr. *Robert Bolton*, a man that frequently publiſheth his judgement for conformity to Prelacy and Ceremonies; In his Diſcourſe of Hap. *p.* 193. he thus ſpeaketh.

I am perſwaded there was never poor perſecuted word, ſince malice againſt God, firſt ſeized on the damned Angels, and the graces of heaven dwelt in the heart of man, that paſſed through the mouths of all ſorts of unregenerate men, with more diſtaſtfulneſs and gnaſhing of teeth, then the name of Puritan *doth at this day; which notwithſtanding as it is now commonly meant* (N.B.) *and ordinarily proceeds from the ſpleen and ſpirit of prophaneneſs, and good fellowſhip, is an honourable nickname, that I may ſo ſpeak, of Chriſtianity and grace. And yet*

for

for all this I dare say, that there is none of them all, but when they shall come unto their beds of death, and are to grapple immediately with the painful terrours of the King of fears, and to stand or fall to the dreadful tribunal of the living God,——them (except the Lord suffer them to fall into the fiery lake with senseless hearts and seared consciences,) would give ten thousand worlds, were they all turned into gold, pleasures and imperial crowns, to change their former courses of vanity, &c. into a life of holy preciseness, strictness, sincerity and salvation. Oh! when the heavens shall shrivel together like a scroll, and the whole frame of nature flame about their ears; when the great and mighty hills shall start out of their places like frighted men, and the fearful reprobate cry and call upon this mountain, and that rock, to fall upon him; when as no

Drome-

Dromedary of Egypt, *nor wings of the morning, ſhall be able to carry them out of the reach of Gods revenging hand: no top of Carmel, no depth of ſea, or bottom of hell, to hide them from the preſence of him that ſits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; no rock nor mountain, nor the great body of the whole earth, to cover them from that unreſiſtible power, that laid the foundations of them; no arm of fleſh, or armies of Angels, to protect them from thoſe infinite rivers of brimſtone, which ſhall be kept in everlaſting flames by the anger of God, when their poor and woeful ſouls ſhall infinitely deſire, rather to return into the loathed darkneſs of not being, and to be hid for ever in the moſt abhorred ſtate of annihilation, then now to become the everliving objects of that unquenchable Wrath, which they ſhall never be able to avoid or to abide, and to*

be chained up by the omnipotent hand of God among the damned spirits, in a place of flames and perpetual darkness, where is torment without end and past imagination: I say, at that dreadful day (and that day will come) what do you think would they give for part in that Purity *which now they persecute? and for the comforts of true-hearted holiness that now they hate? and yet without which (as it will clearly appear, when matters are brought before that high and everlasting Judge) none shall ever see the Lord or dwell in the joyes of eternity. Nay I verily think there are no desperate despisers of godliness or formal opposites to grace, which do now hold Holiness to be Hypocrisie, Sanctification singularity, practice of sincerity too much preciseness, ——but when the pit of destruction hath once shut her mouth upon them, and they are sunk irrecoverably into that*

dungeon

dungeon of fire, would be content with all their hearts, to live a million of years as preciſely as ever Saint did upon earth——to redeem but one moment of that torment] [o p. 159. [*The common conceit of theſe men is, that civil honeſt men are in the ſtate of grace, and that formal profeſſors are very forward, and without exception; but true Chriſtians indeed are* Puritans, *Irregulariſts, exorbitants, tranſcendents to that ordinary pitch of formal piety, which in their carnal comprehenſions they hold high enough for heaven: They either conceit them to be* Hypocrites, *and ſo the only objects for the exerciſe of their Miniſterial ſeverity, and the terrours of God; or elſe though the Lord may at laſt pardon perhaps their ſingularities and exceſſes of zeal; yet in the mean time they diſſweeten and vex the comforts and glory of this life, with much unneceſſary ſtrictneſs and abridgement.*] [*Now*

[*Now of all others, ſuch Prophets as theſe, are the only men with the* Formal Hypocrite; *exactly fitted and ſuitable to his humour: for however they may ſometime declaim boyſterouſly* (N. B.) *againſt groſs and viſible abominations,* (*and that is well*) *yet they are no ſearchers into, nor cenſurers of the ſtate of* Formality: *and therefore do rather ſecretly and ſilently encourage him, to ſit faſter upon that ſandy foundation, then help to draw him forward to more forwardneſs,* &c.]

See alſo his deſcription of a *Puritan*, p. 132.

So in his Direct. for walking with God, *p.* 172. [*Good-fellow meetings and Ale-houſe revellings are the drunkards delight: but all the while he ſits at it, he is perhaps in a bodily fear of the* Puritan *Conſtable.*]

Many ſuch Paſſages tell you how the word [Puritan] was com-

monly interpreted in *Oxford*, *Northamptonshire*, and whereever Learned and Holy Mr. *Bolton* was acquainted.

And having mentioned his testimony of the use of that word, I shall add somewhat of his discovery of this spirit of malignity and detraction that worketh in the *Antipuritans*. In his Disc. of Hap. *p.* 190, 191. he saith,

The reverence and respectful carriage to godly Ministers, which may sometimes be found in the Formal Hypocrite, doth grow towards distast and disaffection, when they press them by the powerful sense, and piercing application of some quickning Scriptures, to a fervency in spirit, purity of heart, precisenes in their walking, supernatural singularity above ordinary and moral perfections, excellency of zeal, and a sacred violence in pursuit of the Crown of life: to an holy strictnes,

extraordinary

extraordinary striving to enter in at the strait gate, and transcendent eminency over the formal righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, to a nearer familiarity with God by prayer, daily examination of conscience, private humiliations, meditation upon the endless duration in a second life; to a narrow watch over the stirrings and imaginations of the heart, and expression of holiness in all the passages of both their callings, &c.——Points and ponderations of which nature are ordinarily to him so many secret seeds of indignation, and many times breed in his formal heart and cold affection exasperation and estrangement, if not meditations of persecution and revenge. Sanctification, preciseness, purity, holiness, zeal, strictness, power of godliness, spiritual men, holy brethren, Saints in Christ, Communion of Christians, godly conferences, conceived prayers, sanctifying the

Sabbath, family exercises, exercise of fasting, and mortifying humiliations, and such like, are commonly to men of this temporising temper, and lukewarm constitution, terms of secret terrour and open taunting.— And sometimes they villanously sport themselves with them, and make them the matter of their hateful and accursed jests, that so they may keep under as much as they can, in discontinuation and contempt, the faithful Professors and Practisers thereof, whom naturally they heartily hate, and also seem thereby to bear out the heartless flourishes of their own formality with greater bravery. Hereupon it is that if they take a child of God but tripping in the least infirmity, (against which too perhaps he strives and prayes with many tears, &c.) slipping only in some unadvised precipitant passage of his negotiations, &c.—— O then they take on unmeasurably!

surably! then they cry out, These are your men of the Spirit; these are the holy brethren; these are your precise fellows; these are they which make such shew of Purity and forwardness! you see now what they are, when matters come out, and their dealings are discovered, when it comes to the tryal indeed, or to a matter of commodity, &c. Are not they proud? are not they malicious? are not they hard-hearted and covetous as well as others, &c? When by the mercies of God (in their sense) they are neither so nor so; but such censures as these are very often the meer evaporations of pure malice, and the bitter ebullitions and overflowings of their gall,] &c.

And p. 164. [*The ordinary conceit which unregenerate men entertain of these (experimental Ministers) is* ——— *that they are troublers of* Israel, *Preachers of terrour, transgressors of policy, un-*

fit to Propheſie at Court, or in the Kings Chappel, peſtilent fellows, Seditioners, Factioniſts, born only to diſquiet the world, and vex mens conſciences. —— *In theſe dayes of ours eſpecially, which are ſtrangely prophane and deſperately naught, in what man ſoever the power of grace, undaunted zeal, reſolute ſincerity, are more working, eminent, and remarkable, ordinarily the more and more implacable, outragious and inflamed Oppoſites ſhall that man find, whereſoever he lives.*]

And p. 10. *The formal Hypocrite is moved to think his ſtate good, and the way of his life to be right, from a prejudice which he conceives from the imputations which the world layeth upon the children of God; ſuch as are Pride, Hypocriſie, ſingularity, melancholy, ſimplicity,* &c.]

Page 38. [*His form of godlineſs, in*

in his conceit is the only true ſtate of Salvation: Whatſoever is ſhort of him is prophaneſs; whatſoever is above him is preciſeneſs. But when upon his death-bed he awaketh.——]

And Direct. for Walk. *p.* 131. [*The more forward he is in the narrow way, the more furiouſly is he perſecuted by the ſpite of tongues: The moſt reſolute for Gods glory, and in good cauſes, is ordinarily moſt railed againſt, and reviled. The foul ſpirit of good fellowſhip, as they call it, is ſtill foaming out againſt Gods chiefeſt favourites the fouleſt cenſures: that they are Hypocrites, Humoriſts, Factioniſts, Traitors, Peſtilent fellows, and all that's naught.——There is no creature that ever God made, not Satan himſelf excepted, which is more maliciouſly ſet againſt and cenſured then good men. Neither ſhould any have ſo bad a name as*

they, could the helliſh miſts of virulent tongues obſcure and ſtain the glory of their reputation.]

And p. 43. [*At this day profeſſors of the gracious way, be in greateſt diſgrace with the moſt, and a drunkard, and ſwaggering good fellow, an Obſerver, a ſon or daughter of Belial, ſhall find more favour, applauſe, and approbation with the world, then a man which makes conſcience of his waies, &c.*——]

Page 350. [*They cry, Theſe forward Profeſſors will all turn phantaſticall, Familiſts, Anabaptiſts, Arrians, any thing: which cry awakes the eye of State jealouſie, and ſo by an unworthy conſequent, draws upon thoſe who are true of heart, even Gods beſt ſervants, and the Kings beſt ſubjects, diſcountenance, ſuſpicions, if not moleſtations, unneceſſarily, cauſeleſly.*]

And p. 351, 352. out of *Auſtins* Epiſt. 137. he ſhews, that it was ſo

in

in his time, [*They every way, and infinitely labour, that when some Professors of holiness have foully fallen indeed, or be only so slandered, the world would believe that they are all such: Do you not think in his time the world did thus exult and exclaim, or in the like manner upon* Lots *fall! Here now you see Puritane* Lot, *who could not endure the good fellowship of the Sodomites, he is now himself seized on by incest: They are all such I warrant you*] citing *du Bartas* translat. by *Silvester*, p. 412.

Base, busie stranger! comest thou hither thus
Controler-like, to prate and preach to us?

No Puritan, thou shalt not here do so, &c.

Thus you hear from a conform-

able Divine, how men calling themſelves Chriſtians, and being (ſome of them) Formally Religious, do prove themſelves *ſelf-deceiving Hypocrites*, by their *unbridled tongues*, in reviling at thoſe as *Puritans* and too preciſe, that will not be ſelf-deceiving Formaliſts as well as they. I ſhall only add ſome of Biſhop *Halls* characters of an Hypocrite, that you may ſee what *Formality* is in the judgement of knowing men.

Page 169. *Walking early up into the City, he turns into the great Church, and ſalutes one of the pillars on one knee; worſhipping that God which at home he cares not for, while his eye is fixed on ſome window, or ſome paſſenger, and his heart knows not whither his lips go. He riſes, and looking about with admiration, complains on our frozen charity, commends the ancient —— with the ſuperfluity of his uſury, he*

he builds an Hospital, and harbours them whom his extortion hath spoiled; so while he makes many beggars, he keeps some. He turneth all gnats into Camels, and cares not to undo the world for a circumstance. Flesh on a Friday is more abomination to him, then his neighbours bed. He abhors more not to uncover at the name of Jesus, then to swear by the name of God.] &c. So Bishop *Hall*.

But, perhaps you'l say, These persons whom you describe, that will make a mock of godliness it self, are not to be numbred with *Hypocrites*, but with the openly prophane.

To which I answer, 1. Even these profess themselves to be Christians, and therefore are *Hypocrites* when they are not what they do profess. 2. They perswade themselves that they are as truly godly as those that they reproach:

reproach: and do not think that it is godlineſs indeed for which they do reproach them: But for engroſſing the name or reputation of *Godlineſs* to themſelves, and for ſome differing manner or way of worſhip. For this is one of the moſt notable cheats, by which the devil undoes the empty Formal Hypocrite: Finding that this man doth own Chriſtianity, in his Opinion, but is void of the true Spirit, and power, and life of Chriſtian Religion, he raiſeth ſome controverſies between the ſerious Chriſtian and the Hypocrite, about ſome controvertible points of doctrine, or about ſome modes or circumſtances of Diſcipline and external worſhip: and when they fall into two ſides, the Hypocrite thinks that it is but in theſe controverſies that the difference lyes: The queſtion, (thinks he) is not whether men ſhould be regene-

rate,

rate, godly and Religious: But whether my way of Religion or the Puritans and Precisians be better!] And presently he hence concludes, that indeed it is he that is the more truly Religious: [For (saith he) my judgement is sound, and the Puritans is erroneous: I am of the judgement of the Church, which he is against: The Reverend Prelates, or Doctors are more of my side then on his: I am for order, and he is for confusion, and unreverence, and followeth the humours and fancies of his own brain.] And thus the Devil turneth his eye from the main difference, and makes him believe that it is these controversies that are all that sets them at a distance. But alas man, thou overlookest the point that thy life and soul lyeth on. Agree first in the serious hearty entertainment and practice of the substance of that holy truth, which

which you are both in point of *Opinion* agreed in, and do not condemn thy ſelf in the things which thou alloweſt; contradict not thy Creed and profeſſion by thy fleſhly, worldly, negligent, careleſs and ungodly life; but love God with all thy heart and might; and firſt ſeek his Kingdom and his Righteouſneſs; (which thou confeſſeſt thou ſhouldeſt do) and then the principal difference is healed, and thou haſt ſcaped the principal danger of thy ſoul: and then it is not a few circumſtantial differences that will divide your hearts, or divide you from each other in the life to come. Men that differ about Biſhops, and ceremonies, and forms of prayer, may be all true Chriſtians, and dear to one another and to Chriſt, if they be practically agreed in the life of godlineſs, and joyn in a holy heavenly converſation. But if you agree

agree in all your opinions and formalities, and yet were never ſanctified by the truth, you do but agree to delude your ſouls, and neither of you will be ſaved for all your agreement.

III. THE third ſort to be ſpoken to, is thoſe that let out their paſſion in hard ſpeeches, againſt ſuperiours or others that they think do wrong or perſecute them on a Religious account. At this time I will ſuppoſe the injury be real, and the complaint be juſt; It yet beſeems not Chriſtians to revile.

1. Conſider, how contrary this is to the example of our Lord. And that he left us his example in this particular, with a ſpecial recommendation for our imitation. When he was falſly accuſed, and the high Prieſt urged him to anſwer

ſwer for himſelf, *Matth.* 26. 62, 63. he was ſilent, to ſhew that he could bear a falſe accuſation, without ſo much as vindicating his innocency by a juſt defence. O learn both the leſſon and motives recommended to you, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18. to the end. [*Servants be ſubject to your Maſters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conſcience toward God endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully: For what glory is it if when ye are buffeted for your faults, ye ſhall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called, becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us; leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps: Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who when he was reviled, reviled not again: When he ſuffered, he threat-*

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ned not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.] Here is the description of your duty, and your example. Are you used worse then Christ was used? [*Isa.* 53. 7, 8 *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*] And if you will come to him and be his Disciples, you must [*Learn of him to be meek and lowly in heart, that you may find rest unto your souls*] Matth. 11. 28, 29.

2. Consider, as our *Kingdom is not of this world*, so we are not to strive for worldly preheminence, nor with carnal weapons, but must know that our *greatness* here is in being the *least*, and *our dignity* in being the servants of all; and our gain is by our loss, and our honour by evil reports, and by disgrace,

disgrace, and our advancement by our debasement, and our preferment by being kept from worldly honour, and our joy by sorrow, and our exaltation by humiliation: And therefore it is contrary to our state of *faith*, to murmur at them that deprive us of the pleasures of *sense*, or the ease and priviledges of the flesh. Mark the description of Christianity in the Gospel, and see how much of it consisteth in contempt of the esteem and honours of the world, and of all the accommodations and pleasures of the flesh, because of the expectation of the unseen eternal pleasures; and in the forsaking all, and taking up our crosse and following a crucified Christ: and in patience, and meekness, and forbearing and forgiving: and rather then seek either verbal or actual revenge, to give the cloak also to him that takes

takes away our coat, and turn the other cheek to him that ſmiteth us. Unmortified paſſion, and untamed nature, will not give ſome men leave to underſtand theſe paſſages of Chriſt; but they ſearch for ſome ſuch figure to expound them by, as ſhall annihilate the plain and proper ſenſe. *Self-love* ſo blindeth men, that when they read theſe Goſpel precepts, they feel not their conſciences touched and bound by them; but they read them as if they read them not, and retain no more, then if it were non-ſenſe which they read. Had the commands aforeſaid (of patience, forbearing and forgiving) but as much force and efficacy upon the ſouls of moſt profeſſours, as the commandments have that are againſt ſwearing, and curſing, and drunkenneſs, and fornication, we ſhould have much better maintained our innocency,

cency, and our peace, and have more honoured our profeſſion, by ſhewing the world Chriſtianity exemplified, in its proper genuine nature and effects.

3. Conſider, it is not oppreſſion, perſecution, or hard uſage that will exempt us from the obligation of the fifth Commandment, which requireth us to *honour* our ſuperiours, (our *Natural*, and *Civil*, and *Eccleſiaſtical* Fathers.) It is the *evil* and *froward*, and not only the *good* & the *gentle* that we muſt honour and obey. And the reaſon is plain from their *Original* and *end*. It is not as *our Truſtees*, or *agents*, or *friends only*, that our rulers muſt be honoured: but as the Officers of the God of heaven: nor is it only as they do good to us: but as they preſerve order and juſtice in the world, and are the pillars of the Commonwealth. If Magiſtrates ſhould deal

deal never so hardly with *you* and *me*; yet still their *office* is of *necessity* to the *common good*: And if their *office* be *necessary*, their *honour* is *necessary*: For when they are *dishonoured* and *despised*, they are *disabled*. And therefore for the common good we must be careful to keep up the honour of our Governours, even when we suffer by them our selves. Princes were none of the best when the Apostles commanded the Churches to honour them, and obey them, and this not only for fear of their penalties, but for conscience sake, *Rom.* 13. 5. Of old it was they that *walkt after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, that were presumptuous and self-willed, and despised Government, and were not afraid to speak evil of dignities: whereas the Angels that are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusations against them before the*

Lord]

Lord] 2 Peter 2. 10, 11. Jude 8. 9.

4. Conſider, that *reviling* is a *tongue-revenge* : and revenge is Gods, and he is engaged to repay, and hath commanded us not to avenge our ſelves. As we muſt not ſtep into the Judges tribunal when ever we think he is negligent in his adminiſtrations ; ſo much leſs muſt we accuſe God of negligence or injuſtice, by ſtepping into his throne. And though the Railers of theſe times, excuſe their ſin with the name of *Juſtice*, they muſt ſhew their Commiſſions for the *executing* of that *Juſtice*, before it will paſs in heaven for an excuſe. Is not God ſevere enough? will not his judgement be terrible enough? would you wiſh men to ſuffer more then he will inflict on the impenitent? what! more then hell? and will it not be ſoon enough? are you ſo haſty for ſo dreadful

dreadful a revenge, can you not ſtay when the Judge is at the door? Mark both the *uſage* and *remedy* of believers, in *Jam.* 5. 5, 6, 7, 8. To the rich and great ones of the world he ſaith [*Ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nouriſhed your hearts as in a day of ſlaughter: Ye have condemned and killed the juſt, and he doth not reſiſt you.*] There's your uſage. [*Be patient therefore brethren unto the coming of the Lord*] There's the remedy. But muſt we ſtay ſo long? he thus repeateth his advice. [*Be ye alſo patient: ſtabliſh your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.*] *Let your moderation be known to all men: the Lord is at hand*] Phil. 4. 5. [*Shall not God avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, that he will avenge them ſpeedily*] Luke 18. 7, 8. There's

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no contradiction between *crying long* and *avenging ſpeedily*.

5. Conſider, what *compaſſion*, rather then *reproach*, you owe to thoſe by whom you ſuffer. They do *themſelves* much more hurt then they do you. Are they great? they have the more to anſwer for, and their fall will be the greater, *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3. If you are your ſelves believers, go into the Sanctuary, and ask the Scriptures what will be their end? and then deny them compaſſion if you can. Alas, conſider, they are at the worſt, but ſuch as you were formerly your ſelves, as to the main. *Paul* makes a ſad confeſſion of his *own* perſecution of the Church, when he was before *Agrippa*, and doth not complain that he was himſelf ſo hardly uſed. [*I verily thought*, ſaith he, *with my ſelf, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jeſus.* —— *Many of the Saints*

Saints I ſhut up in priſon (little thinking that they were Saints) *I gave my voice againſt them. I puniſhed them oft in every Synagogue.* —— *And being exceedingly mad againſt them, I perſecuted them.* —— Acts 26. 9, 10, 11, 12. He would not tell *Agrippa* that he was *mad*, but he might ſpeak more freely of himſelf. O ſirs, pitty poor men that have the temptations of worldly greatneſs and proſperity, and muſt go through a Camels eye if they will come to heaven: who ſtand ſo high that ſun and wind have the greateſt force upon them; Who ſee ſo much vanity, and little ſerious exemplary piety: who hear ſo much flattery and falſhood, and ſo little neceſſary truth, ſaith *Seneca*, [*Divites cum omnia habeant, unum illis deeſt; ſcilicet, qui verum dicat: ſi enim in clientelam falicis hominis potentumque per-*

veneris, aut veritas, aut amicitia perdenda eſt.] If you were in their places, you know not how far you might be prevailed againſt your ſelves. If *little temptations* can make you miſcarry in your places ſo oft and foully as you do, what would you do if you had the *ſtrongeſt baits* of the world, and allurements of the fleſh, and the moſt dangerous temptations that Satan could aſſault you with? Have you not ſeen of late before your eyes, how low ſome have fallen from high profeſſions, and how ſhamefully the moſt promiſing perſons have miſcarried, tha were lifted up, and put to the tryal of ſuch temptations of proſperity, as they had never been uſed to before? O pitty thoſe that have ſuch dangerous tryals to paſs through, and be thankful that you ſtand on ſafer ground; and do not cruelly envy them their perils,

perils, nor reproach them for their falls, but pray, and daily pray for their recovery.

6. Consider, this speaking evil of those by whom you suffer, hath too much of *selfishness* and *corrupted* nature in it, to be good. If *another* suffered as you do, and you were advanced as another is, would you not speak more mildly then? Or if not so, yet the proneness of nature to break out into reviling words, though it were for Religion and for God, doth intimate to you that it hath a suspicious root. Do you find it as easie to be meek and patient, and forgive a wrong, and love an enemy? Take heed lest you serve Satan in vindicating the cause of God. Its an unfit way of serving God, to do it by breaking his Commands. Read seriously the description of a contentious, hurtful, foul-tongued zeal, in *Jam.* 3. and then tell me

what thanks Christ will give you for it. The two great Disciples *James* and *John* thought it would have notably honoured Christ, and curbed the raging Spirit of the ungodly, if he would have let them call for fire from heaven, to consume a Town that refused to receive him. But doth Christ encourage their destroying zeal? No: but he tells them, *Ye know not what spirit ye are of.*] They little knew how unlike to the tender merciful healing Spirit of Christ, that fiery hurting spirit was, that provoked them to that desire! nor how unpleasing their temper was to Christ. This is the very case of many thousand Christians, that are yet young, and green, and harsh, and have not attained to that mellowness, and sweetness, and measure of charity, that is in grown experienced Christians. They think their pas-

sions,

ſions, and deſires of ſome plagues on the contemners of the Goſpel, are acceptable to God, (and blame the charitable as too cold:) when they little know what ſpirit it is that raiſeth that ſtorm in them, and how unlike, and unacceptable it is to Chriſt. Were you as zealous to ſerve all others in love, and to ſtoop to their feet for their ſalvation, and to become all things (lawful) to all men, that you may win ſome, this ſaving zeal would be pleaſing to your Lord, who comes to do the work of a Phyſician, and not of the Souldier, to *ſave* and not to deſtroy, and therefore moſt approves of thoſe that ſerve him moſt diligently in his ſaving work.

7. Laſtly, conſider your paſſions and evil ſpeakings will but increaſe your ſuffering, and make it ſeem juſt, if otherwiſe it were unjuſt. If you are not meek, you

have not the promiſe of inheriting the earth, *Matth.* 5. 5 If you honour not your Parents or ſuperiours, you have not the promiſe that your *daies ſhall be long in the land.* And your evil ſpeaking will make men conclude, that you would do evil if you could and durſt. As its ſaid to be *Zoilus* anſwer when he was askt, why he ſpoke evil of *Plato* and ſuch worthy men [*Quoniam malum facere cum velim non poſſum*] Becauſe I would do them hurt and cannot] Give not occaſion for ſuch a charge.

[*Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compaſſion one of another: love as brethren: be pittiful: be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwiſe bleſſing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye ſhould inherit a bleſſing; for he that will love life and ſee good daies, let him refrain*

refrain his tongue from evil,——— 1 Pet. 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. *But if ye ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terrour, nor be troubled,* ver. 14.

But I ſuppoſe you will here ſay, *Is it not lawful to call a ſpade a ſpade? Is not a wo againſt them that call evil good? may not a man ſpeak of the hurtful crimes of others?* I anſwer. 1. Yes, when as a Magiſtrate, a Miniſter, or a brother, you have a juſt call to tell them of it lovingly, though plainly, to their faces, in order to their recovery. 2. And when you have a juſt call to ſpeak of it to others, either in ſeeking juſtice, or in charity and mercy, for the preſervation of thoſe that elſe will be more hurt by the ſilencing of mens faults, then you do hurt by mentioning them.

But, 1. You may not ſlander men as guilty of what indeed they are not.

2. You may not make mens faults ſeem worſe then they are.

3. You muſt endeavour the *good* of the perſon as much as you can, while you blame the ſin.

4. You muſt not mention mens faults without a call: unleſs the good of himſelf or others do require it.

5. You muſt not do it with a revengeful mind, for perſonal injuries.

6. You muſt manifeſt love and compaſſion in all.

7. You muſt difference between raigning ſins, and humane frailties: and between a courſe of ſin, and an unuſual fall: and between a ſin repented of, and not repented of: and muſt cenſure but as you find God cenſure in his Word.

8. You muſt be more ready to ſpeak of the *good* that is in the ſame men as you have a call, then of

of the evil: and not maliciouſly ſtick only in the galled place.

9. Let it be as far as may be to his face.

10. Let it be according to the common rule of equity. [*Do as you would be done by.*] Not meaſuring out duty to others, by a corrupt impatience of bearing ſuch your ſelves: but ſpeaking nothing for matter or manner to another, which you would think unmeet to be ſpoken to you, if you were in his caſe.

11. And eſpecially be tender of the honour of ſuperiours, yea though they were evil, and do you wrong.

12. And foreſee the conſequents, whether your words are not like to do more hurt then good.

And if ſtill you think that ſufferings will juſtifie reviling, contumelious complaints, conſider theſe two cauſes of your miſtake.

1. You make a *Great* matter of a *Little* one. As there is not ſo great *good* in the proſperity of the fleſh, as worldlings think; ſo neither is there ſo great evil in the loſs of it: what great harm is poverty, impriſonment, reproach or death? Nay, you have a promiſe that all ſhall work together for your good, *Rom.* 8. 28.

2. You make a *ſtrange* matter of that which is the *ordinary condition of believers*: To be hated of all men; to have all manner of evil ſpoken falſly of you: to be perſecuted from one City to another: to be killed all the day long, and counted as ſheep to the ſlaughter. Do theſe ſeem *ſtrange* matters to you? did you never read or hear the *Goſpel*? nor know the terms of Chriſt till now? did you never read of forſaking all for Chriſt, if indeed you would be his Diſciples? did you never count what it muſt coſt

coſt you to be ſaved? did you not renounce the world and the fleſh in your Baptiſmal (oft renewed Covenant,) 1 *Pet.* 4. 11, 12. Beloved, think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryal, as if ſome ſtrange thing happened to you: But rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſts ſufferings.] And will you think ſo ſtrange of ſmaller matters, as to think they excuſe your impatience, and evil ſpeeches?

BY this time you may ſee, if you are willing to ſee, that all among us that are not real Saints, are Hypocrites, if they profeſs themſelves Chriſtians and the ſervants of God: and that miſerable ungodly ſouls, that call ſuch *Hypocrites* as are more diligent then themſelves for their ſalvation, do but diſcover their ignorance and malignity,

malignity, and condemn themſelves in bewraying their hypocriſie, while they reproach the practice of the ſame Chriſtian Religion, which themſelves profeſs; and the obedience to that Scripture, which they confeſs themſelves to be the Word of God. All the prophane, and unſanctified among us, that call themſelves Chriſtians, are certainly Hypocrites. And for the godly, it is the very ſame Religion, that is profeſt by them and you: It is the ſame engagement and Vow that you all made to God in baptiſm: And ſuffer but reaſon impartially to tell you, when two men have entred the ſame Covenant, and one never mindeth it ſo as to keep it; and the other makes it his chieſeſt care; which of theſe is liker to be the diſſembler in his Covenant? When two men profeſs themſelves the ſervants of God, and ſuch as place

their

their hopes in heaven, and one of them makes a jeaſt of ſin, and ſerveth the fleſh and the world which he hath renounced, and hates thoſe that diligently ſerve the Lord; and the other maketh it the principal care and buſineſs of his life to ſerve and pleaſe him, inſomuch as he is reproached for it, as making more ado about it then needs; which of theſe are Hypocrites, and which are ſerious, in the performing of their Covenants, and living according to their profeſſion? If two ſervants promiſe to do your work, and one labour as hard as he can, and the other ſit down and deride him for making ſo much ado, which was it that plaid the Hypocrite in his promiſe? If diligence in Gods ſervice be a ſign of hypocriſie, then promiſe-keeping is hypocriſie, and promiſe-breaking is ſincerity; And then you may transfer the

the caſe to God (who will be the rewarder of them only that *diligently* ſeek him, *Heb.* 11. 6.) and ſay, that it is his faithfulneſs to break his promiſes, and his unfaithfulneſs to keep them. But who will ſpend words on ſuch impious abſurdities? ſo groſs, that the Devil would have ſhewed himſelf a fool to vent them, if he had not made his followers ſuch fools as to believe them. But for the faithful ſervants of the Lord, let them know, that they muſt ſerve him on ſuch terms: They muſt live above the judgement and reputation of this world; and be content that God the ſearcher of hearts ſhall be their Judge, who knoweth both ſincerity and hypocriſie; and will bring forth their righteouſneſs as the light. Chriſtians, you muſt not only *be ſincere* but alſo patiently expect to be *accounted hypocrites*, and pointed.

ed at as the only diſſemblers of the world: You muſt not only *be honeſt*, but patiently expect to be *accounted diſhoneſt*: you muſt not only *be wiſe* and *ſober*, but patiently expect to be *accounted fools* and mad men. You muſt not only *be liberal, charitable*, and contemners of the world, but patiently expect to be *called covetous*, even though you give away all that you have. You muſt not only *be chaſte and temperate*; but alſo patiently expect to be defamed as incontinent and licentious, and as Chriſt was called, a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and ſinners. A Miniſter muſt not only lay out himſelf wholly for the ſaving of mens ſouls, and ſpend himſelf and all that he hath on his Maſters work; but alſo patiently expect to be accounted unfaithful, covetous, and negligent, and murmured at by almoſt all whoſe unreaſonable de-

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ſires he doth not anſwer, and be cenſured by almoſt all, whoſe wills and humours he doth not fulfill; and that is, moſt, that have a *ſelf* that ruleth at home, and therefore they think ſhould be the Idol of others, as it is their own: and that are but unacquainted with the reaſons of thoſe things that do diſpleaſe them. Its little comfort to us to do good, if we cannot bear the eſtimation of doing evil, and cannot loſe all the obſervation, acknowledgement and applauſe of man, as if we had never done the good at all. It is far from Chriſtian perfection *to be honeſt*, and *godly*, and *ſincere*, if we muſt *needs* be *accounted* to be *as we are*, and cannot patiently be *eſteemed diſhoneſt*, *ungodly*, and *hypocritical*; and be *judged worſt*, when we *are beſt*; what have the ſervants of Chriſt loſt their lives for in flames, and by other ſorts of torments, but

for

for the *beſt* of their *ſervice*, and *greateſt* of *their piety* and *fidelity*? When dogs bark at paſſengers, commonly it ſignifieth but two things, *viz.* that they are perſons *that they know not*, or *that they hate*: but it is no ſign that the perſons are bad, or poor, or ſick: For be they never ſo bad and miſerable, if *they know them*, and *love them*, th: dogs will not bark at them. See that thou be not an *Hypocrite*, and then it muſt be accounted a ſmall matter by thee, to be *called an Hypocrite*: yea if perſons that fear God themſelves ſhall ſo eſteem thee, it is no other affliction but what thou muſt be armed for, and patiently undergo. Even from the godly through miſtake, we oft ſuffer moſt for our greateſt duties, and are cenſured moſt for that which God and conſcience moſt approve us for; and loſe our reputations for that which

which God would be greatly offended with us if we did otherwise. As ever then you would not prove your ſelves Hypocrites, ſee that you look not for the Hypocrites reward, as Chriſt calls it, *Matth.* 6. 2. which is, to be approved of men; be they good or bad men, their overvalued applauſe may be but the Hypocrites reward. To be content and patient in doing well, and being judged to do ill; and in being good, and being judged to be bad, is the property of him that is ſincere indeed: therefore to be unthankfully requited, and reviled, and ſpit upon, and buffeted, and ſhamefully uſed and put to death, even by thoſe whoſe lives and ſouls he had with greateſt care and condeſcenſion, pittied, this was the pattern of love and ſelf-denyal that was ſet us by our Lord. And though we cannot reach his meaſure,

ſure, and diſtempered Chriſtians find much ſtrugling before they can bring themſelves to patience, under ſuch ingratitude and unworthy uſage from the world, eſpecially from their miſtaken froward brethren, yet in ſome prevailing meaſure, it muſt be done. For he that cannot ſerve God without the Hypocrites reward, is but an Hypocrite. If he will not be a Chriſtian, obedient, charitable, diligent, faithful, for heaven and the pleaſing of God alone, he is not a Chriſtian indeed. And, alas, what a pittiful reward is it, to be thought well of, and applauded by the tongues of mortal men? How few, were ever the more holy by applauſe? but thouſands have been hurt, if not undone by it. Thou giveſt all thou haſt to the poor: thou ſpendeſt thy ſelf wholly, and all that thou haſt for the ſervice of God, and the good

good of others: Its well: it muſt be ſo. But after all thou art cenſured, ſlandered, vilified and unthankfully, and unmannerly uſed. And what of that! what harm doſt thou fear by it? what advantage thy pride and ſelfiſhneſs might have taken, even by due applauſe and thankfulneſs, its eaſie to perceive: But now, the temptation is taken out of thy way: thou art ſecluded from all creature-comforts; and ſo art directed and almoſt forced to look up to the love of God alone: Now thou haſt no other reward before thee, its eaſier to look ſingly on the Saints reward. When God hath no competitour, to whom elſe then canſt thou turn thy thoughts? when all others abuſe thee, it is eaſieſt to have recourſe to him. When earth will ſcarce afford thee any quiet habitation, thou'lt ſurely look to heaven for reſt.

Thus

Thus much I thought meet to interpose here for the confirmation of the sincere, on occasion of the worlds unjust accusations; and so to perswade them to be satisfied in the portion of the sincere. I now return again to the self-deceiver.

AND here I shall conclude all with these two requests to you, which as one that foreseeth the approaching misery of *self-deceivers*, I earnestly intreat you, for the sake of your immortal souls, that you will not deny me. The first is, that you will be now but as willing to try your selves, as I have been to help you; and as diligent and faithful when you are alone, in calling your own hearts to a close examination, as I have been to hold the light here to you. O refuse not; delay not, to with-

draw

draw your ſelves ſometimes from the world, and ſet your ſelves as before the eye of God, and there bethink your ſelves whether you have been what you have vowed and profeſt to be! and whether that God hath been deareſt to your hearts, and obeyed in your lives, and deſired as your happineſs, who hath been confeſſed and honoured with your lips? Conſider there, that God judgeth not as man; nor will he think ever the better of you, for thinking well of your ſelves: and that there muſt go more to prove your approbation with God, then commonly goes to keep up your reputation in the world. The Religion that ſerveth to honour you before men, and to deceive your ſelves, will never ſerve to pleaſe the Lord and ſave your ſouls. And the day is at hand when nothing but God can give you comfort, and when ſelf-

ſelf-deceivers will become everlaſtingly ſelf-tormentors. O therefore go willingly and preſently to the Word, to your lives, and hearts, and conſciences, and try your ſelves, and try again, and that with moderate ſuſpicion, that in ſo great a buſineſs you may not be deceived, and be ſelf-deceivers.

2. My ſecond requeſt is, that if you do diſcover, or but juſtly ſuſpect your ſelves of hypocriſie and ſelf-deceit, you would ſtick there no longer, but preſently change your *vain Religion*, your *ſeemings* and formalities, for the power of godlineſs, and ſincerity of heart.

But I ſuppoſe that ſome of you will ſay, There lies the difficulty. O that we could do it? But how ſhould it be done?

I anſwer; If thou be really willing to be above Hypocriſie, and a vain Religion, the cure is half wrought at leaſt. And I will not

not tire thee now with many, but help and try thee by these few directions.

In general; Be but what thou hast promised and vowed to be in thy Baptism, and what thou still dost profess to be as a Christian, and it will serve the turn: what that is, I have told you before.

More particularly. *Direct.* 1. Deliberately renew thy Covenant with God: and with a grieved heart, bewailing that thou hast been a Covenant-breaker, give up thy self presently to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as thy Creatour, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, thy Owner, thy Ruler, and thy Father.

2. Renounce sincerely the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, and be at a point with all below; and quit all conceits and hopes of felicity or rest on earth: And absolutely devote and resign thy self, and

and all thou haſt to the will and ſervice of thy Lord, without any ſecret exceptions or reſerves. This is the property and plague of Hypocrites, that ſecretly they have exceptions and reſerves in giving up themſelves to God. They will follow him, except it would diſgrace them or undo them in the world: he ſhall have all, provided the fleſh may not be too much pinched: that is, in plain Engliſh, they take him not *for God*, but for a *ſecond* to *themſelves* and the *world*, and will give him but what the fleſh can ſpare.

3. Fix the eye of a lively faith upon God and upon the everlaſting joyes, and there take up thy whole reward, and look for no other. Quit all expectations of a reward from men. Let it ſeem a ſmall thing to thee, what any mortal man ſhall think or ſpeak of thee; unleſs as Gods honour or

intereſt is concerned in thine. I have told you before, that he is an Hypocrite that will not be godly without the Hypocrites reward; and that can fail no further then he is moved by the wind of mans applauſe, or of ſome other worldly end.

4. Stick not in any externals of Religion, nor in notions and barren uneffectual opinions. So far art thou Religious, as thy ſoul is engaged unto God, and thy life imployed for him: And ſo far thou doſt truly worſhip him as thy heart is drawn up to him in love, and as thou doſt fear him, admire him, truſt him, and take thy pleaſure in him. Think not, that it is a ſaving Religiouſneſs, to be of ſuch or ſuch an opinion, or ſuch a party, or ſuch a Church, or to ſay over ſo many words of prayer, or to keep a task of outward duties; or to be of a ready voluble

voluble tongue, in Preaching, Prayer or Discourse. Religion lyeth in the *Heart* and *Life*.

5. *Indulge* not thy self in *one known sin*. *Retain* no *gross* or *willfull* sin: *Plead* for no *Infirmity*, but make it the business of thy life to extirpate the relicts of the body of death. Be willing of the most searching Word, and of the plainest reproof, and of all the help thou canst get against so dangerous an enemy.

6. Stint not thy self in any *low* degrees of holiness; but love, and long, and strive after the *highest*. If thou bear a secret core of distast against those that outgo thee, it is a mortal sign. Thou must be *perfect in desire*, or thou art *not sincere*.

7. Walk alwaies as in the presence of the holy, dreadful, heart-searching God: Remember that he seeth thy ends, thine affections,

and all thy thoughts. Be the ſame therefore in ſecret as thou art in publike, ſincerely ſearch the Word of God, and know what it is that he would have, and that reſolve on, if all the world ſhould be againſt it. Unreſolvedneſs is hypocriſie: and temporizing or following the greater ſide, for the ſecurity of the fleſh, is no better. Never think thou canſt be too holy, or too obedient. But make it thy ſtudy to do God all the ſervice that thou canſt, whatever ſuffering or coſt it put thee to. Be not aſhamed openly to own the cauſe of Chriſt. In the preſence of the greateſt, remember that thy maſter is ſo much greater, that they are worms and vanity to him. Take heed of culling out the eaſie and cheap part of Religion, and laying by the difficult and dear. Thy Religion muſt be as the *heart* in thy breaſt, which is alwaies working,

working, and by which thou liveſt; which cannot ſtop long, but thou wilt die. But the Hypocrites Religion is like the *Hat* upon his head, for ornament and ſhelter from the weather, and not for life: in the night when none ſeeth him he can lye without it; and in the day he can put it off for the ſake of a friend, and perhaps ſtand bare in the preſence of a greater perſon that expecteth it. So can the Hypocrite too oft diſpenſe with his Religion.

8. Be hearty and ſerious in all thou doſt. Hear, and read, and pray as for thy life. *Sincerity* conſiſteth much in *ſeriouſneſs*. Remember thou art almoſt at another world! while I am ſpeaking and thou art hearing, we are both haſting to our endleſs ſtate. O how ſhould men live on earth, that muſt live here for ſo ſhort a time, and muſt live for ever in heaven or

hell: Theſe things are true, and paſt all queſtion: and therefore for your ſouls ſake loſe not heaven by trifling. Pray not in jeaſt, and ſerve not God in jeaſt, and reſiſt not ſin in jeaſt, leaſt you be damned in good ſadneſs. When you are at work for eternity, its time to do it with all your might. O what unconceivable mercies are now offered you! O what an excellent price is in your hands! and nothing is ſo likely to deprive you of the benefit, as dreaming and dallying, when you ſhould be up and doing; as if this were not your buſineſs, but your play; and ſalvation and damnation were matters of ſport. O do but ſet your ſelves to the pleaſing of God, and the ſaving of your ſouls with all your might, and ply it with diligence as your chiefeſt work, and then you are out of the danger of the Hypocrite. But if ſtill you will

will give the world the prehemi-nence, and your flesh must be pleased, and your prosperity se-cured, and God must have but complements, or the leavings, your misery is at hand, and vengeance shall undeceive those hearts that would not be undeceived by the Word. And you shall remember to the increase of your anguish, that you were told this day, that your *seeming trifling* Religion would prove vain. But I beseech you, as you are men, as you love your souls, dismis us with some better hopes; and now resolve to be downright Christians. Which as I have begged of you, I shall now beg of God.

THE Fools Prosperity.

A

SERMON

Preached at *Coven-Garden*: published upon occasion of some offence and misreports.

By *R. B.*

Printed in the year, 1660.

Prov. 1. 32, 33.

For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But who so hearkeneth unto me, shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

THE bounteous offers and vehement exhortations of Christ here in this Chapter, were accompanied with a foresight and prediction of their rejection, by many: yet doth not that prevent the offers and exhortations; but occasion the prediction of the calamity of the refusers, God will not go out of his way,

way, because the ungodly will not *walk* with him. He will do the part of a righteous Governour, though he foresee that men will not do the part of obedient subjects. But his *primary end* shall be attained upon the *Righteous*, in the successes of his grace, as his *secondary end* shall be upon the *Disobedient*, in the honour of his vindictive *Justice*. This is the sense of the words which I have now read to you. Which 1. Describe the ungodly. 1. By their present way of sin. 2. And by their future state of misery. Their sin is described by, 1. The occasion. 2. The act. 3. The habit. *Prosperity* and *ease* is the occasion: *turning away from God*, and *rejecting his counsel* is the *act*: And *folly* or *simplicity* is part of the *habit*. *Simplicity* is here taken for *sinful foolishness*, and not as it is often for commendable *sincerity*. Whether you

you read it [*The turning away*] or [*the ease*] of the *simple*, it is all one as to the scope and use that I shall now make of it, both being included as to the sense in the other words. *Folly* is mentioned both as the *cause* of their abuse of *prosperity*, and as the *effect* of *prosperity* so abused. Because they *are fools*, they turn Gods mercies to their own destruction: And because they *prosper*, they are confirmed in their *folly*.

2. The words describe the godly. 1. By their *obedience*; they [*hearken unto Christ.*] 2. By their priviledge or *reward*: they [*shall dwell safely, and be quiet from fear of evil.*]

We shall begin with the first and shew you. 1. That it is so, that [*the prosperity of fools destroyeth them.*] 2. *How folly* and *prosperity* concur to their destruction: or *how* prosperity besooleth and destroyeth

stroyeth them. 3. How we should all *improve* this truth to our best advantage.

I. *Scripture* and *experience* concur in *proving the truth* of the conclusion.

1. Though God tell us in his Word of a difficulty that *all* must conquer that will be saved, yet it is a *greater* extraordinary difficulty, that he tells us of as to the *rich* and *prosperous* in the world; such a difficulty as is pathetically expresst by this interrogation, *Luke* 18.24. [*How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God?*] such a difficulty as is expressed by this proverbial comparison, *ver.* 25. [*For it is easier for a Camel to go through a needles eye, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God*] such a difficulty as cast the hearers into admiration, and made them ask, *v.*26. [*Who then can be saved?*] such a difficulty

difficulty as is to *man an impossibility*, v. 27. and leaves only this hope, that [*Things are possible to God, that are impossible to man.*]

2. And though its said of *men* indefinitely that it is but *few that shall be saved*; yet is it noted of the *rich and prosperous* that its *few of them among those few*, or few in comparison of other sorts of men, that shall be saved, *Joh.* 7.48. [*Have any of the Rulers or of the Pharises believed on him?*] 1 Cor. 1. 26. [*For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea and things that are not, to bring*

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to nought things that are, that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.] And therefore Scripture ſpeaketh in ſuch general language, as if ſalvation had been *almoſt appropriated* to the *poor*, and the *rich* had been excluded, becauſe of the *rarity* of their ſalvation, *Luke* 6. 24, 25. *But wo unto you that are rich, for ye have received your conſolation: wo unto you that are full, for ye ſhall hunger: wo unto you that laugh now, for you ſhall mourn and weep.*] Jam. 2. 5, 6. [*Hearken my beloved brethren: hath not God choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promiſed to them that love him? but ye have deſpiſed the poor. Do not rich men oppreſs you, and draw you before the judgement-ſeats? Do they not blaſpheme that worthy name by which you are called?*] And therefore when Chriſt would deſcribe a wicked miſerable man, he doth

doth it in theſe words, *Luke* 16. 19. [*There was a certain rich man which was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared ſumptuouſly every day.*] And *Luk.* 12. 16, 19. [*The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully*, &c.] And when he would deſcribe a godly happy man, he doth it under the name of a *Lazarus*, Luke 16. 20. Judge now by the ſucceſs, as it is diſcovered in the Scriptures, *what good proſperity* doth to *fools*?

I might turn you to *Davids* obſervations in *Pſal.* 37. and 73. and mind you why it is that Chriſt himſelf went before us in a ſtate of choſen poverty, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. and why his Diſciples followed him in this tract; and why he called them ſo much to deny and forſake the riches of the world, and tried them ſo oft by *ſelling all*, and following him in hopes of a hea-

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venly reward. But the point is evident in what's said in my text, and these annexed testimonies.

2. But yet to make you more apprehensive of it, I shall adjoyn the testimony of *Experience*. And tell me whether *prosperity* be not *the destruction of fools*, when you have noted the fruits of it in these few observations.

1. Where do you find *less serious care and labour for salvation*, then among the *prosperous great ones* of the world? what abundance of them are dead-hearted, sensless, disregarders of everlasting things? what abundance of them are of *no Religion*, but the customs of their Country, and the will of their superiours, which are their Bible, their Law, and Gospel, and their Creed! what abundance of them are addicted to that worship which Christ pronounceth *vain*, which is measured by the *traditi-*

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ons of men, and consisteth meerly in ceremonious shews! How few of them are acquainted with the spiritual worship of that God who being a Spirit can accept no worship but what is spiritual! Alas poor souls, they drown their reason in sensuality, and are led as for the slaughter, and think not seriously whither they are going, till prosperity hath ceased to deceive them, and Satan is content to let them see that they have lost, and he hath won the game. They are of the Religion described by the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. that taketh *gain for godliness*: But if *godliness* must go for *gain*, they will have none. To oppress their tenants, and devour widdows houses, and cloak it with a long pharisaical lip-service, or wipe their mouths with some customary complemental prayers, and offer God to be a sharer in the prey, this

this is the *commonest* Religion of the *rich*. But they cannot endure to be so *pure*, as to devote themselves to God in that *pure* and *undefiled Religion* which *visiteth the fatherless and widdows in their affliction, and keepeth men unspotted from the world,*] Jam. 1. 27. What houses or company can you go into, where Religion is more bitterly derided, more proudly vilified, more slanderously reproached, or more ingeniously abused and opposed, then among the *rich* and *full-fed* worldlings?

And if there be here and there a person fearing God among them, he passeth for a *rarity* or wonder! And a *little Religion* goes a great way, and is applauded and admired as eminent sanctity, in persons of the higher rank. If a *poor man* or woman *dwell* as it were in heaven, and walk with God, and think, and speak, and live

live by rule, its scarce regarded; poverty, or want of a voluble tongue, or the mixtures of unavoidable frailties, or some imprudent passages that come from the want of a more polishing culture and education, doth make their piety but matter of jeasting and reproach to the *Dives's* of the world: But if a Lord, or Knight, or Lady have but half their piety, humility and obedience to God, how excellent are they in their Orbs! Nay, if they do but *countenance Religion*, and *befriend* the servants of the Lord, and observe a course of cold performances, with the mixture of such sins for which a poor man should be almost excommunicate, what excellent religious persons are they esteemed?

2. What *families are worse ordered*, and have less of serious piety then the *rich*? If our splendid gallants

gallants should be desired to call their families constantly to prayer, to instruct them all in the matters of salvation, to teach them the Word of God with that diligence as is commanded, *Deut.* 6. and 11. and to help them all in their preparations for death and judgement; to catechise them, and take an account of their proficiency, to curb profaneness, and excess, and to say with *Joshua* 24. 15. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord; how strange and precise a course would it seem to them? should they purge their families of ungodly servants, and imitate *David*, Psal. 101. that would not let the wicked dwell in his sight; should they spend the Lords dayes in as serious endeavours for the spiritual benefit of their families and themselves, as poor men do that fear the Lord, what *wonders* of piety would they seem?

3. In

3. In their *entertainments, visitations*, and *converse*, how rare is serious holy conference among them? How seldome do you hear them remembering their guests and companions of the presence of the holy God, of the necessity of renewing, confirming and assisting grace; of the riches of Christ revealed in the Gospel; of the endless life of joy or misery which is at hand! How seldome do you hear them seriously assisting each other in the examining of their hearts, and making their calling and election sure, and preparing for the day of death and judgement? A word or two in private with some zealous Minister or friend, is almost all the pious conference that shall be heard from some of the better sort of them. Should they discourse as seriously of the life to come, and the preparation necessary thereto, as they do

do about the matters of this life, they would mar the mirth, and damp the pleasure of the company, and be taken for self-conceited hypocrites, or men of an unnecessary strictness and austerity, inconsistent with the jocund lepidity and sensual kind of delight wherewith they expect to be entertained. The honest, heart-warming, heavenly discourse that is usual among poor serious Christians, would seem at the tables of most of our great ones, but an unseasonable interruption of their more natural and acceptable kind of converse.

4. What men do more *carelesly cast away their precious time*, then these *Dives'es* do? They think they have a *license* to be *idle* and *unprofitable*, because they are *rich*: that is, to *abuse* or *hide* their talents, because they have *more* then other men: Forgetting, that to *whom much is given, of them shall much*

much be required. Because they have no *poverty* or *family-necessities* to constrain them to a *laborious* life, they think they may *lawfully* take their ease, and live as droans on other mens labours, as if they *owed* nothing to *God* or the *Common wealth*, but all to their *own flesh.* Their *morning hours* which are most seasonable for meditation and holy addresses unto God, and the works of their calling, are perhaps consumed in excess of sleep: The next are wasted in long attiring and curious adorning of their flesh: from thence they pass to vain discourse, to needless-recreations, to eating and drinking, and so to their vain talk and recreations again, and thence to the repleniſhing of their bellies, and so to sleep: And thus the *words* of the *fool* that Christ describeth in *Luke* 12. 19. are turned by them into *deeds*, and it

is the language of their sensual lives. [*Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.*] Sleeping and sporting, and jeasting, and idle talking, and eating and drinking, and dressing and undressing, with worldly cares and passions intermixt, are the very business and employment of their lives. Thus contemptuously do they waste their precious hours, while God stands by, and time makes haste, and death draws near, and their miserable souls are unprepared, and heaven or hell are hard at hand; and *this is all* the time of preparation, that ever shall be allowed them. O do but look on these distracted piteous souls, that have but a short uncertain life to provide for a life that hath no end, and see how they forget or senslesly remember the matters of infinite concernment! see how they

they trifle away that time that never will return! how they sport and prate away those hours which shortly they would recall, were it possible, with the lowdest cryes, or recover with the deareſt price! When they know not but in a laughter-or a merry jeaſt, their breath may be ſtopped by an arreſt from heaven, or juſtice may ſurprize their miſerable unready ſouls with the cards in their hands, or the cup at their mouths, when they have not the leaſt aſſurance of being out of hell an hour, and yet can ſell this time for nothing, and baſely caſt it away on toyes, which is *all that ever they ſhall have* to prevent everlaſting miſery, or to procure everlaſting joy: ſtand by a while, and hearken to the diſcourſe of ſenſual gallants, and mark how dayes and weeks are ſpent, and then tell me whether the *proſperity* of ſuch *fools*

be not made the occasion of befooling and *destroying* them?

5. What men in the world do *live so sensual a life as rich* and *prosperous worldlings* live? The difference between the sanctified and the unsanctified, the children of God and of the Devil, is, that one of them *liveth after the Spirit*, and the other *liveth after the flesh*, as in *Rom.* 8. to *ver.* 14. you may read at large. And how few of these *Dives's* do think the damning sin of *flesh-pleasing* to be *any* sin *in them* at all? If they do not *eat* till they are *sick*, or *drink* till they are *drunk*, their consciences scarce controul them in their voluptuousness: They never well understood the meaning of such passages as these, [*Rom.* 13. 14. *Make no provision for the flesh, to fullfill the* (*desires or*) *lusts thereof.* Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye.*] 1 Cor. 9. 27.

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I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, &c.] They understand not how far the flesh is their enemy; or else (as they have verbally renounced it) they would use it as an enemy.

6. In their *prosperity* these fools have not the wit to *love or bear the means of their preservation* or *recovery*. They have the *sorest maladies*, and are most impatient of the *remedies*. They are in the *stream* of temptations, and have greater need of help then others; and yet there is none that reject it with more contempt and pride. Plain-dealing Preachers which honest humble souls delight in, do seem intolerable sawcy fellows to these sons of pride. If we tell them but of the sin that God hath most plainly condemned in his Word, or of the judgement which he hath there denounced, and make the most prudent and modest applica-

tion of it unto them, we seem to wrong them, and stir up their pride and enmity against us, and provoke them to slanderous recriminations or revenge. It troubles them not to *commit it*, or to *keep it*, but to *hear* of it: And they take us to be *more faulty* for *admonishing* them of it, then *themselves* for being *guilty* of it. Though we are by office the Messengers of Christ, that will tell them of it shortly to their faces, and feareth not the proudest son of *Belial*, yet are they too stout to be admonished by such as we, but reject our message with hatred and disdain. And indeed it is a wonder of mercy that the prevalency of this impatient guilt and malice, hath not ere this turned plain and faithful preaching into some toothless formalities or homilies, and silenced the Preachers for the security of the offendors;

offendors; and expelled the Physicians lest they displease the sick. The Lord still prevent it. If we tell them with the greatest caution but of the necessary truths, without which a sinful soul is never like to be humbled or saved, we are taken to be turbulent, and injurious to the ease or honour of these auditors. They *must* hear of the necessity of regeneration and holiness, and of the weight and worth of things eternal: and yet they *cannot bear* to hear it. They *must* have heart-searching, and heart-breaking truths, in a searching, awakening manner brought home to them, if ever they will be saved by them: but they cannot endure it. The Surgeon is intolerable that would search their sores: and yet there is no other way to heal them. Alas the heart of man is so hard, that all the skill and industry of the Preacher can

scarce sufficiently sharpen and set home the truth that it may enter: But nothing that is *sharp* can be *endured* by these tender souls. Such language as Christ and his Prophets and Apostles used, doth seem too rough for silken eares. Their *honour* must not be blotted with the mention of their odious sins, and deplorable misery. To *be* a *glutton*, or a *drunkard*, or a *wanton*, or filthy *fornicator*, or a malicious *Cain*, they can endure: But to be told [*Thou art the man*] though it be in secret, and with love and tenderness, they cannot bear. The Minister is thought to wrong them that shall secretly and faithfully admonish them, and tell them truly what will be the end: But Christ will execute all his threatnings, and make them *feel* what now they *hear*, and yet constrain them to confess that he doth not wrong them. We *wrong* them

them now, if we tell a Gentleman of his impiety, and sensuality, and pride, and of his vilifying precious time, and casting it away on cards, and idleness, and unprofitable talk: yea though he be so far forsaken of common grace and reason, as to hate and deride the serious practice of his own profession, and the way that the God of heaven hath prescribed as flatly necessary to salvation, yet cannot he endure to hear of his enmity against the Lord, nor to be told that he beareth the image of the Devil, while he is against the image and Laws of Christ. Should we but privately read a text to them that condemneth them, they are as angry with *us* as if *we made* the Scripture which we read; and it were not the Word of *God*, but *ours*. If we tell them that [*Without holiness none shall see God*,] Heb. 12. 14. and that [*Except they be*

regenerated, converted, and become as little children (in humility beginning the world anew) *they cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven*, Matth. 18. 3. Joh. 3. 3,5,6. that [*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his,*] Rom. 8. 6. or that [*Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge,*] Heb. 13. 4 and that [*The unrighteous, the fornicators, effeminate, covetous, extortioners, drunkards, or revilers, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God,*] 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. Eph. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. they think we talk too precisely or presumptuously to them. You would think by their proud contempt of his threatnings, and their boldness and carelesness in sin, that these silk-worms did imagine they had *conquered heaven*, and the righteous God were *afraid* to meddle with them; or that he would reverse his Laws and pervert his judgement

judgement for fear of dishonouring or offending *them*. Little do they think how many *Dives'es* are now in hell. But methinks they might easily believe, that their honourable flesh is rotten and turned to common earth; and that death will make bold to tell *them* also, when their turn is come, that they have been pampering but a piece of clay; and that it was not worth the loss of heaven, nor the suffering of hell, to spend so much time and care and cost to feed up a carkass for the worms. We must now submissively ask their leave, to tell them what God hath said against them. But God will not ask them leave to make it good upon the highest, the proudest and securest of them all; [*For God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses,*] Psal. 68. 21. [*He is not a*

God

God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with him. The foolish shall not stand in his sight: he hateth all the workers of iniquity, Psal. 5. 3, 4. *The ungodly (that delight not in the Law of the Lord) are like the chaffe that the wind driveth away: They shall not stand in judgement, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous*, Psal. 1.] *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God*, Psal. 9. 17.] Cannot you endure to *hear* and *consider* of these things? How then will you endure to *feel* them? God will not flatter you. If all your greatness enable you not to repulse the assaults of *death*, nor to chide away the gout or stone; and all your honour or wealth will not cure a feaver, or ease you of the tooth-ake; how little will it do to save you from the everlasting *wrath* of God? or to avert his sentence which

which must shortly pass on all that are impenitent? And yet *prosperity* so *befooleth* sensual men, that they must hear of none of this: at least not with any close and personal application. If you speak as Christ did to the Pharises, *Mat.* 21. 45. that *they perceived that he spake* of them, they take you for their *enemy for telling them the truth*, Gal. 4. 16. and meet our doctrine as *Ahab* did *Elijah*, 2 King. 21. 20. *Hast thou found me O mine enemy!* and 1 *King.* 18. 17. *Art thou he that troubleth* Israel? or as the same *Ahab* of *Micaiah*, 1 King. 22. 8. *There is one man* (Micaiah) *of whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesie good concerning me, but evil.* | Or as *Amaziah* the Priest said of *Amos* to King *Jeroboam*, [*He hath conspired against thee: the land is not able to bear all his words,*] Amos 7. 10.

And

And *ver.* 13. *Propheſie not again any more at* Bethel : *for it is the Kings Chappel, and it is the Kings Court.*] They behave themſelves to faithful Miniſters, as if it were a part of their inviolable *honour* and *priviledge*, to be *mortally ſick* without the *trouble* of a *Phyſician*, and to have no body tell them that they are out of their way, till it be too late, or that they are in miſery till there be no remedy : and that none ſhould remember them of heaven till they have loſt it ; nor trouble them in the way to hell, nor ſeek to ſave them, leſt he ſhould but torment them before the time. And thus *proſperity* makes them willingly deaf and blind, and *turn away their ears from the hearing of the Law*, and then their *prayers* for mercy in their diſtreſs, are rejected as *abominable* by the Lord, *Prov.* 1. 24. to 33. and 28. 9.

7. Yea

7. Yea if there be any persecution raised against the Church of Christ, who are the chief acters in it, but the *prosperous, blinded, sensual great ones* of the world? The *Princes* make it their petition against *Jeremy* to the King, [*We beseech thee let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war —— and the hands of all the people in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of his people but the hurt*, Jer. 38. 4. It was the *Presidents and Princes* that said of *Daniel*, [*We shall not find any occasion against this* Daniel, *except we find it against him concerning the Law of his God*, Dan. 6. 5.] Were it not lest some malicious hearer should misapply it, and think I sought to diminish the *reputation of Magistrates*, while I shew the effects of the *prosperity of fools*, I should give you abundance

dance of such lamentable instances, and tell you how commonly the *great ones* of the world have in all ages set themselves and taken counsel against the Lord and against his Christ, *Psal.* 2. and stumbled upon the corner-stone, and taken no warning by those that have been thus broken in pieces before them. How ready is *Herod* to gratifie a wanton dancer with a Prophets head? In a word, as Satan is called the *Prince of this world*, no wonder if he rule the *men of the world, that have their portion in this life*, Psal. 17. 14. and can command his armies, and engage them, and enrage them against the servants of the Most High, that *run not with them to the same excess of ryot*, 1 Pet. 4. 4. And as *James* saith (as aforecited) [*Do not the rich oppress you, and draw you before the judgement seats? Do they not blaspheme that worthy*

name

name by which you are called? Jam. 2. 6, 7.

8. And in all this sin and misery how *senseless* and *secure* are these *prosperous fools?* as merry within a year, or month, or week of hell, as if no harm were near. How wonderful hard is it to convince them of their misery? The most learned, wise or godly man, or the dearest friend they have in the world, shall not perswade them that their case is such as to need a conversion and supernatural change. They cannot abide to take off their minds from their sensual delights and vanities, and to trouble themselves about the things of life eternal, come on't what will; they are resolv'd to venture, and please their flesh, and enjoy what the world will afford them while they may, till suddenly God surprizeth them with his dreadful call, [*Thou fool, this night*

shall

shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?] Luke 12.20. [*So is he that layeth up riches for himself, and is not rich towards God,*] ver. 21.

II. I Should next shew you *how it is* that *prosperity* thus *destroyeth fools.* Briefly, 1. By the *pleasing* of their *sensitive appetite* and fancy, and so overcoming the power of reason. *Perit omne judicium cum res transit in affectum.* Violent affections hearken not to reason. The beast is made too headstrong for the rider. *Deut.*32. 15. [Jesurun *waxed fat and kicked* —— *then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation.*] 2. *The friendship of the world is enmity to God: and if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,*

Jam.

Jam. 4. 4. 1 Joh. 2. 15. And undoubtedly the more *amiable* the world appears, the more *strongly* it doth *allure* the soul to *love* it. And to the *prosperous* it appeareth in the most *enticing* dress.

3. And hereby it taketh off the soul from God. We *cannot* love and *serve God and Mammon*. The heart is gone another way when God should have it. It is so full of love, and desire, and care, and pleasure about the creatures, that there is no room for God. How can they love him with *all their hearts*, that have let out those hearts to vanity before?

4. And the very noise and busle of these worldly things, diverts their minds, and hindereth them from being serious, and from that sober consideration that requireth some retirement and vacancy from distracting objects.

5. And the sense of present ease and

and sweetness, doth make them forget the change that's near. Little do they think whats necessary to comfort a departing soul, when they are in the heat of pride or lust, or taken up with their business and delights. In the midst of bravery and plenty, feasting and sporting, and such other entertainments of the senses, its hard to hold communion with God, and to study the life to come in such a Colledge or Library as this. *Prosperity* and *pleasure* make men *drunk*: and the tickled fancy sports it self in abusing the captivated mind. And these frisking Lambs, and fattened beasts, forget the slaughter: they think in Summer there will be no Winter; and their *May* will continue all the year. Little do they feel the piercing, griping, tearing thoughts, that at death or judgement must succeed their security and mirth.

O how hard do the beſt men find it, in the midſt of health and all proſperity, to have ſuch ſerious lively thoughts of heaven, and of the change that death will ſhortly make, as they have in ſickneſs and adverſity, when death ſeems near, and deluding things are vaniſhed and gone! The words of God have not that force on a ſleepy ſoul in the hour of proſperity, as they have when diſtreſs hath opened their eares. The ſame truths that now ſeem common, lifeleſs inconſiderable things, will then pierce deep, and divide between the joynts and marrow, and work as if they were not the *ſame* that once were laughed at or diſregarded. *Eccleſ.* 7. 2, 3, 4. *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, then to the houſe of feaſting;* (do you believe this?) *for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart. Sorrow is better*

ter then laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.] I beseech you take patiently your character and name here from the Word of God.

6. Moreover these *fools* are by *prosperity* so lifted up with *pride*, that *God abhors* them, and is as it were *engaged* to *abase* them. For [*The Lord will destroy the house of the proud,*] Prov. 15. 25. [*Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand joyn in hand, he shall not be unpunished,*] Prov. 16. 5. [*He scattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts: He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree: He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.*] Luk. 1. 51, 52, 53. [*In the*

the things wherein they deal proudly, he is above them,] Exod. 18. 11. [*For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted,* Luk. 18. 14.] *For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble,* 1 Pet. 5. 5.]

7. But no way doth their prosperity so desperately precipitate them, and make them the scorn of heaven, and the foot-ball of Divine contempt, as by *engaging them in opposition to the word, and wayes, and servants of the Lord.* When it hath drawn them to those sins which God condemneth, and his Ministers must reprove, and hath puft them up with pride, which makes them impatient of his reproofs, and hath increased their worldly interest and treasure, and fleshly provision, which he commandeth them to deny, this presently *involveth them in a controversie*

controversie with Christ, before they are aware, and casteth them into the temptation of *Herod* when he was contradicted in his lust; and they think they are necessitated to stop the mouths that dare reprove them, and to keep under the people, and doctrine, and discipline of Christ, that are so contrary to them, and cross them, and dishonour them in their sin: and to pluck away this thorn out of their foot, and cast it from them. And thus their prosperity and carnal wisdom that is imployed to secure it, engageth the earth-worms in a war with Christ: and then you may conjecture how long they can endure to *kick against the pricks*, and irritate the justice and jealousie of the Almighty, and presume to *abuse* the *apple of his eye*; and who will have the better in the end? The stubble is more able to resist the flames,

flames, and a fly to conquer all the world, then theſe daring lumps of walking clay, to conquer God, or ſcape his vengeance. *Iſa.* 27. 4. [*Who would ſet the bryers and thornes againſt me in battel? I would go through them: I would burn them together.*] Iſa. 45. 9. [*Wo to him that ſtriveth with his Maker: let the potſherds ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth.*] Job 9. 4. [*Who hath hardened himſelf againſt him and hath proſpered?*] They all *imagine a vain thing*, that *ſet themſelves and take counſel together againſt the Lord, and his anointed, to break his bonds, and caſt away his cords from them. He that ſitteth in heaven will laugh, the Lord will have them in deriſion: then ſhall he ſpeak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure.*——*He ſhall break them with a rod of iron, and daſh them in pieces like a potters veſſel.*

Be wise now therefore O ye Kings! be instructed ye Judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: kiss the son lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, when his wrath is kindled, but a little; blessed are all they that put their trust in him, Psal. 2.] They think it is but a few contemptible or hateful men that they set themselves against; forgetting *Act.* 9. 4, 5. *Luk.* 10.16. 1 *Thes.* 4.8. that tell them all is *done to Christ*. And *Mat.* 18.6. [*Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea,*] Mat. 21.44. [*And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*] I will conclude this with *Amaziah's* case, 2 *Chron.* 25. 16. [*Art thou made of the Kings counsel? forbear:*

why

why should'st thou be smitten? Then the Prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened, &c.]

III. BEfore I tell you what *use* to make of the Doctrine of this text, I shall first tell you by way of caution, what *use* you should *not make* of it.

1. Though the prosperity of fools destroy them, do not hence accuse God that giveth them prosperity. 2. Nor do not think to excuse your selves. 3. Nor do not think that riches are evil: for the *things* are *good*, and *mercies* in themselves, and being rightly used, may further their felicity. But it is the *folly* and *corruption* of their *hearts*, that thus abuseth them, and maketh *good* an *occasion* of evil. I may allude to *Pauls* words con-

cerning the Law, *Rom.* 7. 7, 13. [*Are they sin? or is that which is good made death to them? God forbid. But sin, that it may appear sin, worketh death by that which is good: because they are carnally sold under sin.*]

4. Nor must you *cast away* your riches, or *refuse* them when offered by God. But take them as a faithful steward doth his Masters stock, not *desiring* to be overburdened or endangered with the charge, but *bearing* what is imposed on you, resolving to improve it all for God. Not *loving* nor *desiring* wealth, authority or honour, nor yet so *lazie*, *timerous* or *distrustful* as not to *accept* the burden and charge, when God may be served by it. To *cast away* or *hide* your talents, is the part of an *unprofitable servant.*

5. Take heed lest under pretence of contemning riches and prosperity, you be tempted to

contemn your Governours, or to *speak evil of dignities*, or diminish the honour of those that are set over us, whose honour is necessary to the ends of Government, and therefore to the peoples good. Though *James* reprove the Church for partiality in over-honouring a man for a *gold-ring* or *gay apparel*, yet doth he not go about to abate the *honour* of *authority*. *Magistracy*, and *riches* must be here distinguished.

6. Take heed lest while you declaim of the misery of the rich, you think to be saved meerly for being *poor*. For *poor* or *rich*, if you be *ungodly*, you must *turn* or *die*. God doth not condemn men for their *riches*, but their *sin*: Nor save any for their *poverty*, but their *faith* and *piety* (through Christ.)

But the Uses you should make of the Text are these.

1. *Grudge not* at the *prosperity*

of ungodly men, but compassionate them in their danger and misery.

2. Be *not afraid* of the *prosperity* of the wicked, *Psal.*49. 16,17,18, 19. Its *they* that should be *afraid*, that have so *low* to fall.

3. Take heed that you *desire not riches* or *prosperity*: unless you desire that the way to heaven should be made *harder* to you, that is *so hard* already. Be *contented* with *food and rayment*. *Desire* but *your daily bread*, unless as it is needful for your Masters service, and the relief of others.

4. Honour those ever with a *double honour*, that are *great and godly*, that are *rich and religious*; not because they are *rich*, but because they are so *strong and excellent in grace*, as to overcome such great temptations; and to be *heavenly* in the midst of *earthly plenty*, and to be faithful stewards of so much.

much. Religious faithful Princes and Magistrates cannot easily be valued and honoured too much. What wonders are they in the most part of the earth! what a blessing to the people that are ruled by them! Were they not strong in faith, they could not stand fast in such a stormy place. Where is there in the world a more lively resemblance of God, then a *holy Prince* or *Governour*, that liveth no more to the flesh then the poorest, for all his abundance of fleshly accommodations, and that devoteth and improveth all his power, and honour, and interest, to the promoting of holiness, love and concord?

5. Let *great men* have a double interest in your *prayers*. *They* have a *double need* of *grace and help*; and *we* have a *double need* that they should be *gracious*. O think how hard it is to save their faith, their

innocency, and their souls, and to save the Gospel and the publike peace in the midst of so many and great temptations. And therefore pray hard, where prayer is so needful.

And O that I were now able to speak such enlightening and awakening words to you, as might shew you at once your *worldly prosperity*, and the *heavenly glory*, in their proper value! and that God would now open your eyes and hearts, accordingly to esteem and seek them. Gentlemen, will you give this once an impartial hearing, to one that *envyeth* not your wealth, but foreseeth the end of it, and how it will forsake you, and in how deplorable a case you will then be found, if you have not laid up a treasure in heaven, and secured the everlasting riches. I grudge you not your prosperity: for *God* doth not grudge it you:

yea

yea the *Devil* himself can afford it you for a time, while you serve him by it, and are captivated to his will in these golden fetters. And say not that it is I, that call such *fools:* you see *here* it is *God,* that knoweth what he saith, and feareth not to speak it. But let me with due submission propound to your sober consideration, these Questions which your consciences are concerned to resolve.

Quest. 1. Can any thing prove him truly wise that directly contradicteth the wisdom of the Lord? and *valueth* most the things that are most *vilified* by the doctrine and example of Christ and his Apostles? and vilifieth that which Christ extolleth?

Quest. 2. Can any thing prove that man to be wise, that is not wise enough to be saved? surely it altereth the case but little, whether Satan be served in English, or

in Latin, Greek or Hebrew, in Spanish, Italian or French? or whether you go towards everlasting wo, in leather or in silk; and whether a miserable unsanctified soul do dwell in a comely or deformed body; and in a stately building or a smoaky cottage; and be titled a Lord, a Knight, or a Plow-man; and whether he feed on the most *delightful* or the *coursest* food. Alas, all this will soon be nothing. *The belly for meats: and meats for the belly: but God will destroy both it and them,* 1 Cor. 6. 13. It is the *endless life* that puts the estimate upon *all things here.*

Quest. 3. Is he wise that preferreth a feather to a Kingdom? an hour to eternity? earth to heaven? If you say *you do not so,* let your *thoughts,* your *desires,* your *delights,* your *cares,* and your *labour* and *diligence* be the witnesses: and conscience, and God shall finally judge.

judge. A man of reason should never make *such a matter* of *nothing*, as if there were so *great a difference* between *riches* and *poverty*, *honour* and *dishonour*; and a mans life or happiness consisted in his abundance! As its usually the badge of empty, childish brainsick *women*, to value a curiosity of attire, and to have *mind* and *time* for so *many toyes*, and to make ostentation of their *pride* and *folly*, by their curled, spotted, gawdy vanity, as if they were afraid lest any should be unacquainted with it, and should think them wise; so is it but a more plausible deliration in those, that are more taken up with names, and titles, and commands, with houses and lands, and pompous attendance; and yet *more brutish* where *lust*, and *sport*, and *meats*, and *drinks* are taken for felicity; while God and heaven stand by, neglected: and men for-

get

get that they are *called Christians*, and that they *are men*.

Quest. 4. Is it wisdom to *esteem men* by their *prosperity and pomp*? and to admire a gilded post, or an ignorant adorned wanton: and yet to overlook the divine and heavenly nature of the sanctified, and the beauty of holiness, and the image of God upon an humble gracious soul? when *that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God*, Luk. 16. 15.

Quest. 5. Is it wisdom to be feasting, and playing, and dancing, while the soul is under the wrath of God, and in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of its iniquity? and by the noise, and business and pleasures of the world, to be diverted and hindered from the speedy setling and securing your everlasting state? should not a man of reason without delay, the first thing

thing he doth, make sure of his title to eternal happiness, when he is not sure of another hour, and if he miscarry in this, he is undone for ever? should that time be laught and plaid away, that hasteth so fast, and is all so short for so great a work, as the securing our salvation? should men and women be courting, and complementing, and fooling away their precious time, when the work is undone for which they were born into the world, and for which they have their lives, and all their mercies?

Quest. 6. Should all this be done by those that sin against their knowledge, and confess all this while that the world is vanity, and know how it will leave them, and that all this is true?

O sirs, it must needs be the grief of a foreseeing man, to think, when *you forget* it, what a change.

is coming, and what a sad preparation you are making, and how little a while the musick, the feast, the cards and dice, the filthy lusts and wanton dalliance will continue? and what a damp of self-tormenting desperation will seize upon those careless scornful hearts, that now will not be wakened and warned, nor understand any further then they see or feel! In compassion to those that are passing hence to another world, I beseech you sometime withdraw your selves from sensual divertisements, and soberly bethink you, whether *this be* the *place* and *company* that you must be with for ever? how long this merry life will last! and whether this be the work that the God of heaven did send you about into the world? and whether it would be more comfortable to your review when time is gone, to think

of

of your dayes of sensual delight, or of a holy, and humble, and heavenly conversation! and to hear with *Dives*, Luk. 16. 25. [*Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and* Lazarus *evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*] O then you would wish that you had never heard those aery titles, and never possest those sumptuous houses; nor never tasted those delicious feasts; nor never worn that gay attire; nor never known that deceiving company; nor been polluted and brutified with those beastly lusts! Then conscience will force the now befooled *Dives* to cry out, [O that I had been the most despised man on earth, while honour did befool me? O that I had lain in medicinal poverty and rags, when I took this mortal surfeit of prosperity? O that I had lain in tears and sor-

row,

row, when I was infatuated by fleshly mirth and pleasure! and that I had been among the Saints that foresaw and provided for this day, when I drown'd the voyce of Christ and conscience, with the laughter of a fool, and the noise of worldly business and delights!] O then how revengefully will you befool your selves, that had time and knew no better how to use it! And how sensibly will you justifie the wisdom of believers, that bent their care for things eternal! I am ashamed of my heart, that melts not in compassion in the foresight of your wo! and that I beg not of you with tears and importunity, to prevent it, and to have mercy on your selves. *Paul* had a better heart then I, that *ceased not to warn every one day and night with tears*, Act. 20. 31. and speaketh thus of such as you [*Phil.* 3. 18, 19.

For

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, the enemies of the Cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.] When the *conversation* of believers *is in heaven, from whence they look for the Lord their Saviour.*

I suppose you are *afraid* of the *austerities of Religion*; and the Devil would perswade you, that it is but a self-tormenting, or hypocritical life, that we commend to you under the name of *godliness*: especially when you see the sadness of some honest souls, that are abused by Satan through the advantages of melancholy. But I must profess, it is *sorrow* that I call you from and would prevent: It is no unnecessary grief that I would perswade you to, but to a life of heavenly peace and joy.

If

If Satan have abused any servants of Christ, by darkening, and troubling, and discomforting their minds (which is his ordinary endeavour, when he can no longer keep men quiet, and careless, and presumptuous in their misery;) this is clean contrary to the nature of Religion, and the commands of Christ, that chargeth them *alway to rejoyce.* Do you think that I cannot have more solid joy with my *daily bread,* in the apprehensions of the *love of God,* and the belief of his promises of eternal life, then foolish mirth comes to, that's likened to the *crackling of thorns* in the fire? *Eccles.* 7. 6. *you* are for *mirth*; and *we* are for *mirth*: but its a hearty, solid, spiritual, grounded, lasting mirth that we invite you to: and its a beastly sensual pleasure that ungodly men desire. For my part, its almost half my work, to promote

mote the joyes of true believers, and to disswade them from such causeless despondencies and troubles as would rob them of their comforts, and God of their love, and thanks and praise. Had you but tasted once the difference between this *inward feast*, and *yours*, I should need no more words with you, to perswade you that *godliness* is a life of *joy*. Dare any of you say and stand to it, that there is not *greater matter for joy* in the love of Christ, then in the love of a harlot? in the assurance of salvation, then in lands and Lordships? in the foresight of heaven, then in the company of light-headed voluptuous people, that have not wit enough to be serious, nor faith enough to foresee that which will so sadly and speedily spoil the sport? To be foolishly merry in the midst of misery, doth but make you the objects of greater

greater compassion. Be as merry as you can, so it be grounded, and durable, and caused by that which God, and faith, and solid reason will approve; and doth not tend to greater sorrows. Bethink you well whether Christ and his Apostles lived not a more comfortable life then you? And imitate them in their way of mirth and spare not.

But if you are unsanctified sensual worldly men, lay by your mirth till you are fitter for it; and take your portion from the Apostle *James* 5. 1, 2, 3, 5. [*Go to now ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten: your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: ye have heaped treasure together for the last dayes.*

dayes.——Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, and been wanton: ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter.]

What pitty is it to see men destroy themselves with the mercies of the Lord! what pitty is it to see them so eager for prosperity, and so regardless of the proper use and benefit of it? O be not like the Bee that is drowned in her own honey. And do not so greedily desire a greater burden then you can bear: and to have more to answer for, when you have been so unfaithful in a little! And if you believe Christ that tells you how *hardly rich men come to heaven*, and how *few of them are saved*, long not for your danger, and grudge not if you have not these exceeding difficulties to overcome. You would be afraid to dwell in that air where few men 'scape infection: or to feed on

on that dyet that most are killed by. Its evident by the *effects* that *prosperity befooleth* and *undoeth* the most; we find you on your *sick beds* in a more tractable frame.

1. Then a man may *speak* to you about the case of your immortal souls, with less contempt then now we meet with. You look not then for laced speeches, but will more patiently hear our plain discourses of eternal life. 2. Then you will *seem serious your selves*, and speak almost like those that you called *Precisians* and *Puritans*, for remembring you of these things in your prosperity. 3. Then you have *some better relish* of truth and duty; and judge better of the *matter* and *manner* of exhortation and prayer then you do now. 4. Then you have more *charity* and *moderation* to others; and are not enraged to the destroying of those that are not of your

your opinions in all your formalities. 5. You would then shake the head at him that should offer you cards, or dice, or fleshly vanities; and you would tell others that its wiser to *be delighted in the Law of God, and meditate in it day and night.* 6. Then you will speak as contemptuously of the honour, and pleasures, and profits of the world, and of pleasing men before the Lord, as we do now. 7. And then you will confess the *preciousness of time*: the folly of *misspending* it; and that *one thing is necessary*, for which we can never (regularly) do too much. And why are you not now of the mind that you will be at death or judgement, but that your folly doth turn your prosperity to your bane? Once more I beseech you for the Lords sake, retire from the deceiving world to God: And if you *care* where you live to all eternity,

eternity, *chooſe your abode*; and *now ſet your heart upon it*, and ſeek it as your happineſs. If all theſe warnings are refuſed, conſcience ſhall tell you when you would not hear it, that you were warned.

HAd time allowed it, I ſhould next have delivered my meſſage to the humble upright ſouls. All you [*that hearken to the Lord, ſhall dwell in ſafety, and be quiet from the fear of evil.*] Iſa. 3. 10. [*Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him.* —— *Wo to the wicked; it ſhall be ill with him.*] Eccleſ. 8. 12. *Though a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged, yet ſurely I know it ſhall be well with them that fear God.*] Pſal. 73. 1. *Truly God is good to* Iſrael; *even to ſuch as are of a clean heart.*] Pſal. 37. 5, 28, 34, 37. *Commit thy way unto the Lord:*

Lord : trust in him and he shall bring it to pass. For the Lord loveth judgement, and forsaketh not his Saints : they are preserved for ever ——wait on the Lord and keep his way ——and when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace.]

If you say, *How are they safe that are so tossed by sufferings?* I answer. 1. Is he not safe that hath the promise of God for his security, and is related to him as his child, and hath Christ for his Head and Saviour? 2. Is he not safe that is delivered from the wrath of God, and the flames of hell, and dare look before him to eternity with hope and comfort? and shall live with Christ in joy for ever? 3. Is he not safe that hath no enemy, but what is in his Fathers power. 4. And that hath

no hurt but what shall certainly procure his good? 5. Nor any, but what he may rejoyce in: and is sure shall be the matter of his thanks when it is past? that shall lose nothing but what he hath already forsaken, and esteemeth but as dross and dung? How oft have we told God in our prayers, that we had rather have the light of his countenance in adversity, then be strange to him in prosperity? and that we would not refuse that state of suffering, that should be blest to the destruction of our sins, and the furthering our communion with God, and our assurance of salvation, and in which we might most serve and honour him, in the world. Did we *live by sense*, we should misjudge of our estate: but seeing we *live by faith*, and in the *way* can *see the end*, we can say *we are safe* in the thickest of our enemies, and will

will not fear *what man can do*, while the *Almighty* is our *rock*, and *fortress*: well may we *be quiet from the fear of evil*, when we are saved from the *great everlasting evil*! No evil shall follow us into heaven; no malice shall there defame us; nor virulent tongue blaspheme our holy profession or our Lord; for the mists of hellish blasphemies shall never ascend to blot the glory of Christ or of his Saints. Who then shall take us out of his hands? who shall condemn us? it is he that justifieth us! not only against the calumnies of malice, but also against the accusations of Satan for our sin. How safe and quiet are those millions of souls, that are now with Christ? How little are they annoyed, or their joy or melody interrupted, by all the rage of earth or hell? The glory of the sun may sooner be darkened or blemished by ob-

loquy, then their celestial glory; For they are glorified with the glory of their Lord; and rejoyce with his joy, and live because he liveth. Be of good chear, Christians: the haven is within the sight of faith: we are almost there: Adversity is our speediest and surest passage. And then let sin, and rage, and malice, do their worst.

33

FINIS.

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men. As, bad or ſick Phyſicians may be Gods inſtruments to cure our bodies, and a wicked Carpenter may make a good houſe; ſo a wicked Miniſter may well expound and apply the Scriptures; and he that *refuſeth* the grace of Chriſt, may prevail with others to *accept* it: The ſign poſt that ſtands out of dore it ſelf, may invite others into the houſe: and the hand upon a poſt that goes not one ſtep of the way, may point it out to others. There's more *ſelf-denyal* required to the forſaking of their *own* ſins, then to perſwade *others* to forſake *theirs:* A covetous man cares not how liberal others be; nor a glutton, drunkard, or fornicator, how temperate and chaſte his neighbours be. And hence it is that many of theſe, that refuſe a holy life themſelves, are willing their children or ſervants ſhould embrace it. The end of the ballance that goeth down

down it self, doth cauſe the other to go up. Other mens ſouls are more beholden to Hypocrites then their own. They are like the common Mariners, that enrich the Merchant by fetching home his treaſure, when they have nothing but a poor maintenance themſelves: Or like Taylors that make garments for others which they never wear themſelves: Or like Carpenters that build fair houſes which they never dwell in. Or like the Cook that dreſſeth meat which he eateth not. God giveth Hypocrites their uſeful gifts, for the ſervice of the Church more then for themſelves. He ſometimes maketh thoſe to be nurſing Fathers to his Church, that are butchers of their own ſouls: and makes thoſe his inſtruments to undeceive others, that deceive themſelves. And thus far their Religion is not *Vain*.

But

But 1. It is *Vain* as to *Gods ſpecial acceptation.* True Religion pleaſeth God: but the ſelf-deceivers Religion he abhorreth. *He hath no pleaſure in fools*, Eccleſ. 5. 4 He asketh ſuch, *To what purpoſe is the multitude of their ſacrifices?* Iſa. 11. 11. and ſaith, he is *full of their burnt-offerings, and delights not in them?* when they come to appear before him, he asketh them, *Who required this at their hands, to tread in his Courts?* and bids them *bring no more vain oblations; incenſe is an abhomination to him: the calling of their aſſemblies he cannot away with, and their ſolemn meetings are iniquity,* ver. 12, 13. *Their appointed feaſts his ſoul hateth; they are a trouble to him; he is weary to bear them. When they ſpread forth their hands, he will hide his eyes; when they make many prayers, he will not hear;* becauſe they do not forſake their ſins,

ſins, *ver.* 14. Becauſe *they turn away their ear from hearing his law, their prayer is abhomination to him*, Prov. 28. 9. and 15. 8. and 21, 27. When they have *ſinned*, inſtead of repenting and forſaking it, they think to pleaſe God by their *Religion*, and ſtop the mouth of Juſtice with their *ſervices*; when as they do but provoke him more, by adding *Hypocriſie* to *iniquity*. Were they truly willing to let go their ſins, and to pleaſe God by univerſal obedience, he would willingly accept them, and be pleaſed with their ſervices. But when mens Religion, their prayers and other duties, are not uſed againſt their ſins, but for them, nor to kill them, but to cover them, nor to overcome them, but as it were to bribe God to give them leave to ſin, becauſe they are not willing to forſake it, this is the ſelf-deceiving Religion of Hypocrites, that is in *Vain*.

2. And

2. And *this Religion* is in *Vain*, as to any promoting of a work of Sanctification upon his ſoul. It weaneth him not from the world: It crucifieth not the fleſh, with its affections and luſts: It doth not further his ſelf-denyal; nor driveth him to Chriſt, by a faith unfaigned: It never raiſeth him to a heavenly life; nor kindleth the love of God within him: It is dead and uneffectual, and cannot produce theſe high effects. Yea on the contrary, it hardeneth him in ſin and ſelf-deceit: it hindereth his repentance: it emboldeneth him in his fleſhly worldly life: and quieteth him in the neglect of Chriſt and heaven.

3. Moreover this kind of Religion is in *Vain* as to any ſolid peace of conſcience. It affordeth him none of the well-grounded, dureable comforts of the Saints: But on the contrary keeps out ſolid

lid comfort, by feeding him with aery delusory conceits; and maketh him to be but his *own* comforter, upon fancies and confidence of his own, when the Spirit of Christ is not his comforter, nor doth the Word of God speak any peace at all unto him.

4. Lastly, his Religion is in *Vain* as to his Salvation. As he had but an image of true Religion, so he shall have but an image of Heaven. Some dreams and self-created hopes of happiness, may accompany him to the door of eternity: but there they will leave him to everlasting horrour.

V. *Use* 1. FRom what hath been said, you may see the reason why an outside formal seeming Religiousness, is a thing so common in the world, in comparison of the life and power of godliness.

lineſs. It is an eaſier thing to bring men to the ſtricteſt opinion, then to bring them to the affectionate and deep reception and practice of the truth. A ſtrict opinion may be held without any great coſt and trouble to the fleſh. It is the *practice* that bereaveth a ſinner of the pleaſure of his ſin. It is the common trick by which moſt Hypocrites cheat their ſouls, to turn to the ſide and *opinion*, and *aſſemblies* and *company* which they think to be the beſt; that ſo they may perſwade themſelves the more eaſily, that they are as good as thoſe opinions and that company doth import, and that they are truely ſuch as thoſe they joyn with. As men are taken by others for ſuch, as thoſe they correſpond with; ſo hypocrites take themſelves for ſuch. As if it would prove that a man is ſound, becauſe he dwelleth with them that are ſo?

Or

Or as if it would prove a man rich or honourable, that he converſeth with ſuch? As God will not ſave any Nations on earth, becauſe they are ſuch Nations; nor will he ſave men becauſe they are of ſuch or ſuch a trade, or becauſe they are skilled in this or that art or ſcience; no more will he ſave men for being of this or that party or Sect, in matters of Religion. One thinks, when he hath lived a fleſhly life, that he ſhall be ſaved for hearing or ſaying the Common-prayer, or becauſe he is for Prelacy and Ceremonies: another thinks he ſhall be ſaved, becauſe he can pray without a book, or form of words, or becauſe he frequenteth the private meetings, of thoſe that more diligently redeem their time, for ſpiritual advantages then others do: another thinks he ſhall be ſaved becauſe he is mocked as a Puritan or as too ſtrict, as others are

that are ſerious believers, and diligent in the things of God: and another thinks that he ſhall be ſaved becauſe he is rebaptized, or becauſe he joyneth with ſome ſeparating Congregation, which pretendeth to be more ſtrict then others. But none ſhall be ſaved, on any ſuch account as theſe. *Cain* could not be ſaved, for being the firſt born in the family of *Adam*: *Cham* could not be ſaved for being in the Ark and family of *Noah*: Nor *Eſau* for being in the houſe of *Iſaac*: Nor *Abſalom* for being the ſon of *David*: Nor *Judas* for being a Diſciple in the family of Chriſt. Even *Mary* that brought him forth, could not have been ſaved by him, if ſhe had not had a better title; and had not bore him in her heart, *Mark.* 3. 34, 35. when they talk to him of his Mother and his brethren, Chriſt looked upon thoſe that ſate about him,

and

and told them that Whoſoever ſhall do the will of God, the ſame is his Brother, his Siſter, and his Mother. It is no outward badge and livery, but a heart-title, that muſt prove you the heirs of heaven. You may be ſnatcht out of the pureſt Church on earth, and from the pureſt ordinances, and out of the arms of the moſt upright Chriſtians, and caſt into hell, if you have no better evidences then ſuch, to ſhew for your ſalvation. If ever you be ſaved, it muſt not be becauſe you are Papiſts, or Proteſtants, Lutherans, or Calviniſts, Arminians, Antinomians, Anabaptiſts, Independents, Presbyterian, or Prelatical; formally and meerly as ſuch: But becauſe you are true Chriſtians, that have the Spirit of Chriſt, (*Rom.* 8. 9.) and are conformed to him, in his ſufferings, death and reſurrection, and live in ſincere

obedience to his will. But Hypocrites that want the inward life and power of Religion, and are conscious of their willfull sins, would fain borrow something from the parties which they joyn with, or the opinions which they take up, or the formal outward worship which they perform, or the alms which they give, to make up the want, and cheat their souls with a self-created confidence, that they shall be saved.

But more specially you may hence observe, the reason that Popery hath so many followers, and that it is so easie a thing to make an Infidel, or whoremonger, or drunkard, to turn a Papist, when yet it is not easie to bring them to faith, and chastity, and temperance, much less to the unfeigned love of God, and to a holy heavenly life. Though I doubt not but there are many sincere-

hearted

hearted Christians among the Papists, yet Popery it self is of an hypocritical strain, and is notably suited to the Hypocrites disposition. It is revived Pharisaisme: I marvel that they tremble not when they read themselves so lively characterized by Christ, with the addition of so many terrible woes, as in *Matth.* 23. and other places frequently they are: [Woe to you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites.] They bind heavy burdens of external observances, to lay upon the consciences of their Proselytes: They make broad their Phylacteries; and in variety of holy vestures, they make ostentation of such a Religion, as a Peacock may have when he spreads his tail. They contend for superiority and titles, to be called Rabbi, Pope, Cardinal, Patriarch, Primate, Metropolitane, Archbishop, Diocesane, Abbot,

Prior, Father, &c. to the great disturbance of all the Nations of the Christian world. They must needs be the Fathers and Masters of our faith: They shut up the Kingdom of heaven against the people, forbidding all to read the Scriptures in their vulgar tongue, without a special license from their Ordinary: and commanding them to worship God in a strange tongue which they do not understand: By the numbers of their Masses and prayers for the dead, they delude the souls, and devour the Patrimony of the living. In Temples, and Altars, and Images, and Ornaments consisteth no small part of their Religion: They make more of tything mint, anise and cummin, then of judgement, mercy, and faith, the weightier matters of the Law. The outside they make clean, and appear as beautiful to men, as ceremonies and

outward

outward pompe can make them. They make it a part of their Religion to murder the living Saints, and keep holy dayes for the dead: They build the Tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the Sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had lived in the dayes of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets. Thus *Matth.* 23. is their description. They have their Touch not, taste not, handle not, after the commandements and doctrines of men, their voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, and other rudiments of the world, and things that have a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh, *Col.* 2. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. How eafie a thing is it to bring an ungodly man to be of a Religion that consisteth in

ſuch things as theſe ? in eating fiſh on certain dayes in ſtead of fleſh; in ſaying over ſo many Pater Noſters, and Ave Maries, and naming ſo oft the name of Jeſu: in worſhipping a piece of conſecrated bread with divine worſhip; in bowing and praying before an Image: in praying to the ſouls of ſuch as the Pope tells them are Saints in heaven: in croſſing themſelves, and being ſprinkled with holy water, and uſing *agnus dei's*, and conſecrated grains and amulets: in dropping of beads: in ſaying ſuch words as a prayer at ſuch a canonical hour, and ſuch words at the next canonical hour: in hearing a Maſſe in Latine; and ſaying a Latine prayer: in being anointed with hallowed oyl; & burning hallowed candles on the Altars by day-light: in going ſo many miles to the Chappel of a Saint in Pilgrimage: in carrying about them

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a bone, or ſome other ſuppoſed relict of a ſuppoſed Saint. In confeſſing their ſins ſo often to a Prieſt, and doing penance, if he impoſe it on them. And ſo while they live in whoredom, or drunkenneſs, or ſwearing, or lying, or all theſe, and many other ſuch, it is but confeſſing and doing penance, and to it again; on which account (whatever ſome of them ſay for the neceſſity of contrition) it is uſual with them, to venture upon the ſins of whoredom, drunkenneſs and the reſt, becauſe they have ſo eaſie and cheap a remedy at hand. And therefore I wonder not that among Infidels (who after Baptiſm, Apoſtatize to deny the holy Scriptures, and the immortality of the ſoul, and the life to come,) and among common ſwearers, and curſers, and whoremongers, and drunkards, the Papiſts find their labours moſt ſucceſſful, and that no fiſh

will so easily take their bait: Nor do I wonder that it is a point of the Popish faith, that none but the Children of the Devil, that are void of the love of God, and are unjustified, can possibly turn Papists. (For they tell us that all are such till they are Papists: saving that they are many of them for the salvation of heathens.) A poor wretch that is captivated to his odious lusts, and goes under a galled accusing conscience, will be content to take a Popish cure, and quiet his soul with a few compliments and formalities. But to bring one of these men to a through conversion, to a true humiliation, to a deep hatred of all sin, and a love of holiness, to close with Christ as his only refuge from the wrath of God, and to give up himself without any reservation, and all that he hath, to the will and service of the Lord: to love God as

as his portion, and the infinite tranſcendent good; to take all the honour and riches of the world as loſs and dung, and uſe all in due ſubſerviency to everlaſting happineſs; to crucifie the fleſh, and mortifie all his earthly inclinations, and live a life of ſelf-denyal, and to walk with God, and ſerve him as a Spirit in ſpirit and in truth, and to keep a watch over thoughts, affections, words and deeds; to live by faith upon a world and happineſs that is to us unſeen; and to live in preparation for their death, and wait in hope to live with Chriſt; this is Chriſtianity and true Religion; and this is it that they will not ſo eaſily be brought to. Its eaſier to make an hundred Papiſts, then one true regenerate Chriſtian. Children can make them a baby of clouts: And the ſtatuary can make a man of Alabaſter or ſtone: But none can

can give life, which is essential to a man indeed, but God. There needeth the Spirit of the living God, by a supernatural operation, and a kind of new creation, to make a man a real holy Christian. But to bring a man to make such a congee, or wear such a vesture, or say such and such words, and make to himself a mimical Religion, this may be done without any such supernatural work. O therefore take heed of cheating your souls by hypocritical formalities, instead of the life and power of Religion.

Use 2. AND now, O that the Lord of life, would help me so to apply this truth, and help you so to apply it to your selves, that it might be as a light set up in the Assembly and in all your consciences, to undeceive the miserable self-deceivers, and to bring

bring poor Hypocrites into some better acquaintance with themselves, and to turn their *seeming Vain* Religion, into that which is real and serious and saving!

And now I am to search and convince the Hypocrite, I could almost wish that all the upright tender souls that are causelesly in doubt of their own sincerity, were out of the congregation, lest they should misapply the *Hypocrites* portion to *themselves*, and think it is *their* case that I am describing: as it is usual with ignorant patients, especially if they be a little melancholy, when they hear or read the description of many dangerous diseases, to think that all or some of them are theirs, because they have some symptomes very like to some of those which they hear or read of. Or lest their *fearful* souls should be *too much terrified*, by hearing of the misery

of

of the Hypocrite; as a fearful child that's innocent, will cry, when he sees another whipt that's faulty. But if *thou wilt* stay and hear the Hypocrites examination, I charge thee, poor humbled drooping soul, that thou do not *misunderstand* me, nor think that I am speaking those things to *thee*, that are meant to the *falsehearted enemies of the Lord*! and do not imagine that *thou art condemned in his condemnation*; nor put not thy self under the stroaks that are given *him*: but rejoyce that thou art saved from this state of *self-deceit* and misery. And that thou mayst have some shelter for thy conscience against the storm that must fall on others, look back on the foregoing description of the Hypocrite, and thou mayst find that thou hast the saving graces, which I there discovered him to want. Let these at present be before thine eyes, and tell thee,

Thou

Thou art not the perſon that I mean.

1. Thou art humbled to a *loathing of thy ſelf* for thy tranſgreſſions.

2. Thou art willing to give up thy ſelf to Chriſt, without reſerve, that as thy Saviour, he may cure thy miſerable ſoul, upon his own terms.

3. The favour of God is dearer to thee then the favour of the world, or the pleaſures and proſperity of ſinners: and thou longeſt more to love him better, and to feel his love, then for any of the honours or advancements that fleſh and blood deſire.

4. It is the life to come that thou takeſt for thy portion, and prefereſt before the matters of this tranſitory life.

5. Thy Religion employeth thee about thy *heart*, as much as about the *outſide* and *appearing* part: It

in

is *heart-sins* that thou observest and lamentest, and a *better heart* that thou daily longest, and prayest, and labourest for.

6. Thou livest not in any *gross and deadly sin*; and thou hast no *infirmity* but what thou longest and labourest to be rid of; and goest on in the use of Christs holy means and remedies for a cure.

7. Thou dislikest not the *highest degree of holiness*, but lovest it and longest after it, and hadst rather be *more holy* then be *more honourable* or *more rich*.

8. Thou unfeignedly lovest the image of Christ on the souls of all his servants where thou canst discern it; and seest a special excellency in a poor humble heavenly Christian, though never so low or despicable in the world, above all the pompe and splendor of the earth; and thou lovest them with a special love; and the *holier* they

are

are, the *better* doſt thou love them.

9. Thou loveſt the moſt convincing ſearching Sermons, and wouldeſt fain have help to know the worſt that is in thy heart; and comeſt unto the light that thy heart and deeds may be made manifeſt.

10. All this is the *bent* and *byas* of thy *ſoul*; thy *habituated, ordinary* caſe; though there be not alway the ſame *opportunity* for the *acts*, nor the ſame *degree* of *life* in *acting*: It is not only a *good mood* that thou art *frightened* into by ſome affliction, and then returneſt to thy carnal courſe of life again: But thou *heartily continueſt* thy *conſent* to the *Covenant* which thou haſt made with Chriſt, and wouldeſt not turn back to a worldly, carnal, or a formal life, nor change thy Maſter, nor forſake the holy courſe which thou art engaged in for all the world. This

he hath written ſo much for Biſhops, hath written as much to prove the Pope to be the Antichriſt) in his Sermon called, *Abrahams Tryal*, p. 72. ſaith [*And even in theſe times, the godly live among ſuch a generation of men, as that if a man do but labour to keep a good conſcience in any meaſure, though he meddle not with matters of ſtate, or Diſcipline, or Ceremonies; (As for example, if a Miniſter diligently Preach, or in his Preaching ſeek to profit, rather then to pleaſe, &c. — Or if a private Chriſtian makes conſcience of ſwearing, ſanctifying the Sabbath, frequenting Sermons, or abſtaining from the common corruptions of the time) he ſhall ſtrait way be condemned for a* Puritan, *and conſequently be leſs favoured, then either carnal Goſpeller or a cloſe Papiſt*, &c.] Such were the times then.

Dr. *Robert Abbot*, publike Profeſſor

ſeſſor of Divinity in *Oxford*, and after Biſhop of *Salisbury*, in a Sermon on *Eaſter*-day, 1615. ſaith; [*That men under pretence of truth, and Preaching againſt the* Puritans, *ſtrike at the heart and root of faith and Religion now eſtabliſhed among us: that this Preaching againſt the Puritans was but the practice of* Parſons *and* Campians *Counſel, when they came into* England *to ſeduce young Students: And when many of them were afraid to loſe their places if they ſhould profeſſedly be thus, the Counſel they then gave them was, that they ſhould ſpeak freely againſt the Puritans, and that ſhould ſuffice,*] &c. ſo he.

Of Arch-Biſhop *Lands* tract of *Doctrinal Puritaniſm*, drawn up for and preſented to the Duke of *Buckingham*, ſee *Prin* in his Tryal, p. 156. Divers Biſhops have affirmed that the Jeſuites were the maſters of this nickname here in *England*,

England, and the promoters of it.

But of the common ſenſe of this word, and the uſe of it, I ſhall now call in no more witneſſes but Mr. *Robert Bolton*, a man that frequently publiſheth his judgement for conformity to Prelacy and Ceremonies; In his Diſcourſe of Hap. *p.* 193. he thus ſpeaketh.

I am perſwaded there was never poor perſecuted word, ſince malice againſt God, firſt ſeized on the damned Angels, and the graces of heaven dwelt in the heart of man, that paſſed through the mouths of all ſorts of unregenerate men, with more diſtaſtfulneſs and gnaſhing of teeth, then the name of Puritan *doth at this day; which notwithſtanding as it is now commonly meant* (N.B.) *and ordinarily proceeds from the ſpleen and ſpirit of prophaneneſs, and good fellowſhip, is an honourable nickname, that I may ſo ſpeak, of Chriſtianity and grace. And yet*

for

for all this I dare say, that there is none of them all, but when they shall come unto their beds of death, and are to grapple immediately with the painful terrours of the King of fears, and to stand or fall to the dreadful tribunal of the living God,—— then (except the Lord suffer them to fall into the fiery lake with senseless hearts and seared consciences,) would give ten thousand worlds, were they all turned into gold, pleasures and imperial crowns, to change their former courses of vanity, &c. into a life of holy preciseness, strictness, sincerity and salvation. Oh! when the heavens shall shrivel together like a scroll, and the whole frame of nature flame about their ears; when the great and mighty hills shall start out of their places like frighted men, and the fearful reprobate cry and call upon this mountain, and that rock, to fall upon him; when as no

Drome-

Dromedary of Egypt, *nor wings of the morning, ſhall be able to carry them out of the reach of Gods revenging hand: no top of Carmel, no depth of ſea, or bottom of hell, to hide them from the preſence of him that ſits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; no rock nor mountain, nor the great body of the whole earth, to cover them from that unreſiſtible power, that laid the foundations of them; no arm of fleſh, or armies of Angels, to protect them from thoſe infinite rivers of brimſtone, which ſhall be kept in everlaſting flames by the anger of God, when their poor and woeful ſouls ſhall infinitely deſire, rather to return into the loathed darkneſs of not being, and to be hid for ever in the moſt abhorred ſtate of annihilation, then now to become the everliving objects of that unquenchable wrath, which they ſhall never be able to avoid or to abide, and to*

be chained up by the omnipotent hand of God among the damned spirits, in a place of flames and perpetual darkness, where is torment without end and past imagination: I say, at that dreadful day (and that day will come) what do you think would they give for part in that Purity which now they persecute? and for the comforts of true-hearted holiness that now they hate? and yet without which (as it will clearly appear, when matters are brought before that high and everlasting Judge) none shall ever see the Lord or dwell in the joyes of eternity. Nay I verily think there are no desperate despisers of godliness or formal opposites to grace, which do now hold Holiness to be Hypocrisie, Sanctification singularity, practice of sincerity too much preciseness, ——but when the pit of destruction hath once shut her mouth upon them, and they are sunk irrecoverably into that

dungeon

dungeon of fire, would be content with all their hearts, to live a million of years as preciſely as ever Saint did upon earth——to redeem but one moment of that torment] ſo p. 159. [*The common conceit of theſe men is, that civil honeſt men are in the ſtate of grace, and that formal profeſſors are very forward, and without exception; but true Chriſtians indeed are* Puritans, *Irregulariſts, exorbitants, tranſcendents to that ordinary pitch of formal piety, which in their carnal comprehenſions they hold high enough for heaven: They either conceit them to be* Hypocrites, *and ſo the only object for the exerciſe of their Miniſterial ſeverity, and the terrours of God; or elſe though the Lord may at laſt pardon perhaps their ſingularities and exceſſes of zeal; yet in the mean time they diſſweeten and vex the comforts and glory of this life, with much unneceſſary ſtrictneſs and abridgement.*] [*Now*

[*Now of all others, such Prophets as these, are the only men with the* Formal Hypocrite; *exactly fitted and suitable to his humour: for however they may sometime declaim boysterously* (N. B.) *against gross and visible abominations,* (*and that is well*) *yet they are no searchers into, nor censurers of the state of* Formality: *and therefore do rather secretly and silently encourage him, to sit faster upon that sandy foundation, then help to draw him forward to more forwardness,* &c.]

See also his description of a *Puritan*, p. 132.

So in his Direct. for walking with God, p. 172. [*Good-fellow meetings and Ale-house revellings are the drunkards delight: but all the while he sits at it, he is perhaps in a bodily fear of the* Puritan *Constable.*]

Many such Passages tell you how the word [Puritan] was com-

monly interpreted in *Oxford*, *Northamptonshire*, and whereever Learned and Holy Mr. *Bolton* was acquainted.

And having mentioned his testimony of the use of that word, I shall add somewhat of his discovery of this spirit of malignity and detraction that worketh in the *Antipuritans*. In his Disc. of Hap. *p.* 190, 191. he saith,

The reverence and respectful carriage to godly Ministers, which may sometimes be found in the Formal Hypocrite, doth grow towards distast and disaffection, when they press them by the powerful sense, and piercing application of some quickning Scriptures, to a fervency in spirit, purity of heart, precisenes in their walking, supernatural singularity above ordinary and moral perfections, excellency of zeal, and a sacred violence in pursuit of the Crown of life: to an holy strictness, extraordinary

extraordinary striving to enter in at the strait gate, and transcendent eminency over the formal righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, to a nearer familiarity with God by prayer, daily examination of conscience, private humiliations, meditation upon the endless duration in a second life; to a narrow watch over the stirrings and imaginations of the heart, and expression of holiness in all the passages of both their callings, &c.—Points and ponderations of which nature are ordinarily to him so many secret seeds of indignation, and many times breed in his formal heart and cold affection exasperation and estrangement, if not meditations of persecution and revenge. Sanctification, preciseness, purity, holiness, zeal, strictness, power of godliness, spiritual men, holy brethren, Saints in Christ, Communion of Christians, godly conferences, conceived prayers, sanctifying the

Sabbath, family exercises, exercise of fasting, and mortifying humiliations, and such like; are commonly to men of this temporising temper, and lukewarm constitution, terms of secret terrour and open taunting.— And sometimes they villanously sport themselves with them, and make them the matter of their hateful and accursed jeasts, that so they may keep under as much as they can, in disestimation and contempt, the faithful Professors and Practisers thereof, whom naturally they heartily hate, and also seem thereby to bear out the heartless flourishes of their own formality with greater bravery. Herempon it is that if they take a child of God but tripping in the least infirmity, (against which too perhaps he strives and prayes with many tears, &c.) slipping only in some unadvised precipitant passage of his negotiations, &c.—— O then they take on unmeasurably!

ſurably! then they cry out, Theſe are your men of the ſpirit; theſe are the holy brethren; theſe are your preciſe fellows; theſe are they which make ſuch ſhew of Purity and forwardneſs! you ſee now what they are, when matters come out, and their dealings are diſcovered, when it comes to the tryal indeed, or to a matter of commodity, &c. Are not they proud? are not they malicious? are not they hard-hearted and covetous as well as others, &c? When by the mercies of God (in their ſenſe) they are neither ſo nor ſo; but ſuch cenſures as theſe are very often the meer evapprations of pure malice, and the bitter ebullitions and overflowings of their gall,] &c.

And p. 164. [*The ordinary conceit which unregenerate men entertain of theſe (experimental Miniſters) is* ——— *that they are troublers of* Iſrael, *Preachers of terrour, tranſgreſſors of policy, un-*

fit to Propheſie at Court, or in the Kings Chappel, peſtilent fellows, Seditioners, Factioniſts, born only to diſquiet the world, and vex mens conſciences. —— In theſe dayes of ours eſpecially, which are ſtrangely prophane and deſperately naught, in What man ſoever the power of grace, undaunted zeal, reſolute ſincerity, are more working, eminent, and remarkable, ordinarily the more and more implacable, outragious and inflamed Oppoſites ſhall that man find, whereſoever he lives.]

And p. 10. *The formal Hypocrite is moved to think his ſtate good, and the way of his life to be right, from a prejudice which he conceives from the imputations which the world layeth upon the children of God; ſuch as are Pride, Hypocriſie, ſingularity, melancholy, ſimplicity, &c.*]

Page 38. [*His form of godlineſs,*

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in his conceit is the only true state of Salvation: Whatsoever is short of him is prophaness; whatsoever is above him is precisenes. But when upon his death bed he awaketh.——]

And Direct. for Walk. *p.* 131. [*The more forward he is in the narrow way, the more furiously is he persecuted by the spite of tongues: The most resolute for Gods glory, and in good causes, is ordinarily most railed against, and reviled. The foul spirit of good fellowship, as they call it, is still foaming out against Gods chiefest favourites the foulest censures: that they are Hypocrites, Humorists, Factionists, Traitors, Pestilent fellows, and all that's naught.—— There is no creature that ever God made, not Satan himself excepted, which is more maliciously set against and censured then good men. Neither should any have so bad a name as*

they, could the hellish mists of virulent tongues obscure and stain the glory of their reputation.]

And p. 43. [*At this day professors of the gracious way, be in greatest disgrace with the most, and a drunkard, and swaggering good fellow, an Usurer, a son or daughter of* Belial, *shall find more favour, applause, and approbation with the world, then a man which makes conscience of his waies, &c.*——]

Page 350. [*They cry, These forward Professors will all turn phantastical, Familists, Anabaptists, Arrians, any thing: which cry awakes the eye of State jealousie, and so by an unworthy consequent, draws upon those who are true of heart, even Gods best servants, and the Kings best subjects, discountenance, suspicions, if not molestations, unnecessarily, causelesly.*]

And p. 351, 352. out of *Austins* Epist. 137. he shews, that it was so

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in his time, [*They every way, and infinitely labour, that when some Professors of holiness have foully fallen indeed, or be only so slandered, the world would believe that they are all such: Do you not think in his time the World did thus exult and exclaim, or in the like manner upon* Lots *fall! Here now you see Puritane* Lot, *who could not endure the good fellowship of the Sodomites, he is now himself seized on by incest: They are all such I warrant you*] citing *du Bartas* translat. by *Silvester*, p. 412.

Base, busie stranger! comest thou hither thus
Controler-like, to prate and preach to us?

No Puritan, thou shalt not here do so, &c.

Thus you hear from a conform-

able Divine, how men calling themſelves Chriſtians, and being (ſome of them) Formally Religious, do prove themſelves *ſelf-deceiving Hypocrites*, by their *unbridled tongues*, in reviling at thoſe as *Puritans* and too preciſe, that will not be ſelf-deceiving Formaliſts as well as they. I ſhall only add ſome of Biſhop *Halls* characters of an Hypocrite, that you may ſee what *Formality* is in the judgement of knowing men.

Page 169. *Walking early up into the City, he turns into the great Church, and ſalutes one of the pillars on one knee; worſhipping that God which at home he cares not for, while his eye is fixed on ſome window, or ſome paſſenger, and his heart knows not whither his lips go. He riſes, and looking about with admiration, complains on our frozen charity, commends the ancient —— with the ſuperfluity of his uſury,*

he

he builds an Hospital, and harbours them whom his extortion hath spoiled; so while he makes many beggars, he keeps some. He turneth all gnats into Camels, and cares not to undo the world for a circumstance. Flesh on a Friday is more abomination to him, then his neighbours bed. He abhors more not to uncover at the name of Jesus, then to swear by the name of God.] &c. So Bishop *Hall.*

But, perhaps you'l say, These persons whom you describe, that will make a mock of godliness it self, are not to be numbred with *Hypocrites*, but with the openly prophane.

To which I answer, 1. Even these profess themselves to be Christians, and therefore are *Hypocrites* when they are not what they do profess. 2. They perswade themselves that they are as truly godly as those that they reproach:

reproach: and do not think that it is godlineſs indeed for which they do reproach them: But for engroſſing the name or reputation of *Godlineſs* to themſelves, and for ſome differing manner or way of worſhip. For this is one of the moſt notable cheats, by which the devil undoes the empty Formal Hypocrite: Finding that this man doth own Chriſtianity, in his Opinion, but is void of the true Spirit, and power, and life of Chriſtian Religion, he raiſeth ſome controverſies between the ſerious Chriſtian and the Hypocrite, about ſome controvertible points of doctrine, or about ſome modes or circumſtances of Diſcipline and external worſhip: and when they fall into two ſides, the Hypocrite thinks that it is but in theſe controverſies that the difference lyes: The queſtion, (thinks he) is not whether men ſhould be regenerate,

rate, godly and Religious: But whether my way of Religion or the Puritans and Precisians be better!] And presently he hence concludes, that indeed it is he that is the more truly Religious: [For (saith he) my judgement is sound, and the Puritans is erroneous: I am of the judgement of the Church, which he is against: The Reverend Prelates, or Doctors are more of my side then on his: I am for order, and he is for confusion, and unreverence, and followeth the humours and fancies of his own brain] And thus the Devil turneth his eye from the main difference, and makes him believe that it is these controversies that are all that sets them at a distance. But alas man, thou overlookest the point that thy life and soul lyeth on. Agree first in the serious hearty entertainment and practice of the substance of that holy truth, which

which you are both in point of *Opinion* agreed in, and do not condemn thy ſelf in the things which thou alloweſt; contradict not thy Creed and profeſſion by thy fleſhly, worldly, negligent, careleſs and ungodly life; but love God with all thy heart and might; and firſt ſeek his Kingdom and his Righteouſneſs; (which thou confeſſeſt thou ſhouldeſt do) and then the principal difference is healed, and thou haſt ſcaped the principal danger of thy ſoul: and then it is not a few circumſtantial differences that will divide your hearts, or divide you from each other in the life to come. Men that differ about Biſhops, and ceremonies, and forms of prayer, may be all true Chriſtians, and dear to one another and to Chriſt, if they be practically agreed in the life of godlineſs, and joyn in a holy heavenly converſation. But if you

agree

agree in all your opinions and formalities, and yet were never ſanctified by the truth, you do but agree to delude your ſouls, and neither of you will be ſaved for all your agreement.

III. THE third ſort to be ſpoken to, is thoſe that let out their paſſion in hard ſpeeches, againſt ſuperiours or others that they think do wrong or perſecute them on a Religious account. At this time I will ſuppoſe the injury be real, and the complaint be juſt; It yet beſeems not Chriſtians to revile.

1. Conſider, how contrary this is to the example of our Lord. And that he left us his example in this particular, with a ſpecial recommendation for our imitation. When he was falſly accuſed, and the high Prieſt urged him to anſwer